ROME AND HER MONUMENTS

HAROLD STANNARD

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ROME AND HER MONUMENTS

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PREFACE

THE story is told of Pius IX—who may have inherited it from Gregory XVI—that when receiving foreigners in farewell audience he was accustomed to inquire how long they had been in Rome. In those who told him that their stay had lasted less than six months he took no further interest. "So you've seen it all," he would say casually, and pass on. Those whose visit had been longer, but had still fallen short of a year, were more sympathetically treated, and were favoured with the comment: "Then you've not seen it all." But in the foreigner who had resided in Rome for more than a twelvemonth the Pope discovered a man and a brother. "Ah," he would say smilingly, "so now you know that you can never see it all."

This book is designed to accelerate promotion into Pius IX's third class. It may therefore appear both unnecessary and undesirable—unnecessary because everything is now comprehended in the laconic omniscience of Baedeker, and undesirable because travellers will not thank a writer for bidding them note the omissions and defects of their sight-seeing. Nevertheless, there is more in Rome than guide-book can catalogue or student appreciate. Twice in her history, and each time for centuries on end, she was the centre

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of Europe, and the changes which time has wrought on her hills reflect the rise and fall of peoples and all the march of ideas and events that has moulded the destinies of a continent. Because of this Rome is the longest and most detailed chapter which man has yet written in the book of his life, and though some will demand no more than an outline of the plot, and will content themselves with the Forum and St. Peter's and the Victor Emmanuel monument, others will find pleasure in learning that there is more between the lines than they can ever hope to read. These latter will not disdain an attempt to clothe the guide-book's facts with some of that atmosphere without which buildings are mere piles of stones and views mere stretches of land. It is true that, as Marion Crawford says, appreciation of Rome is matter rather of feeling than of knowledge ; but there is a feeling for historical tradition evocable only by knowledge gained from books, and the visitor to Rome who lacks it is in like case with the wretched American whom I overheard on the Pincio confusing St. Peter's with the Pantheon, and opining that people came to Rome because there was such a lot about it in the guide-books. (His long-suffering wife said, " Yes, dear." This helps to explain why so many Europeans marry American wives.)

On the other hand, Rome is not just a medley of historical data. She is herself ; she has character ; and the outstanding quality of her character is its irony, which touches all she holds and gently puts it in its place. There is no city in the world which so helps thought to attain perspective. Before I knew

Rome I had classed Keats' grave with its bitter epitaph among the sights better left unseen. But read in its setting, beneath the still unravished Aventine, the young English poet's declaration that his immortal name was writ in water only puts into words the contrast which every quarter of Rome exhibits between the shams that pass and the truths that endure. Indeed, it even suggests itself in Rome that, in a remote, imaginative sense, such as would have delighted Keats himself, his words are true. For Rome's own story is epitomized in water—in the water which flowed through the aqueducts that were her glory once, and plays in the fountains that are her adornment now. It streams away and is gone; but its flow is maintained, ever-changing, yet eternal like Rome herself; and the sound of running water is a part of her.

Her irony, of which her fountains are the reminder, makes Rome one. For all the diversity of her monuments and for all her 800,000 citizens she is so completely one that at times she shows herself curiously small. Her newspapers chronicle the opening of a new boot shop or a new tea room; her argumentative life conducts itself within one café; and though her people cannot all be called together by the same herald, they can all take their time from the same midday gun. These trifles are symptomatic of Rome's insistent, comprehensive unity, an aspect of her which such a book as this runs grave risk of failing to convey. Since it is largely concerned with detail, it is forced to classify and analyse; and the underlying unity threatens to be destroyed in the process. A sense of this danger has dictated the arrangement of the book. It passes

from the general to the particular. Its first section surveys the city as a whole from its various view-points; the next two sections are of somewhat narrower scope and confine themselves respectively to the Rome of the Emperors and the Rome of the Popes; in Section Four, a survey of the development of Christian architecture, the topographical limitations become quite definite; and in its concluding pages the book passes frankly into detail with a study of half a dozen typical churches.

To go farther would be to enter the province of the archaeologist who can recall the life of a bygone world through the study and comparison of its fragmentary remains. I venture to think that a good deal of the archaeologist's delight in his work may be experienced by those who lack the now somewhat discredited advantages of a classical training. I hope therefore to complete this survey of Rome by the publication at no distant date of a further volume concerned only with details. It will treat of the city's sculptures and inscriptions, and an indication of its method may be gathered from the discussion of the Titus reliefs and the Vestals' inscriptions in Chapter III of the present work.

I should perhaps add that the matter is closely packed, and that, like Baedeker, the book is not meant for light reading; and I will give myself the pleasure of noting that it was accepted for publication at the very hour when Britain's King and Queen were acknowledging Roman cheers from the balcony of the Quirinal Palace.

My work has been much furthered by the good will of friends. I owe grateful thanks to Mgr. Mann for

placing his unrivalled knowledge at the disposal of a tyro in mediaeval history; to Mrs. Strong for the stimulus of her wide scholarship and sympathetic interest; to Cav. Quadrani for his kindness in granting me students' privileges in the papal museums; to Dr. Ashby for permission to read in the library of the British School; and to Miss Grimes for the loan of a camera, which saved me much note-taking.

In the days before secondary education had attracted the notice of Parliament and the Press, schoolmasters sought to equip their charges with a knowledge of how to convert British currency into decimal money and how to express Gregorian dates in the terms of the Latin calendar. The former dodge has long since escaped me—could I have recalled it, I might have done better in my exchange of sterling for lire—but the knack of the latter accomplishment persists yet, and as modern life offers few chances for its display, I gladly avail myself of an appropriate occasion.

H. S.

Scribebam Romae,
a.d. iv. id. mart. a.u.c. MMDCLXXIIII.

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I

TUTTA ROMA

CHAPTER I

ROME FROM THE HEIGHTS

The Pincio—Effects of light—Time's hand—Il cupolone—Michael Angelo—The Janiculum—From the Capitol to the sea—The urban prospect—Garibaldi—Quality of the view—Martial—Bramante's tempietto—Churches on the Aventine—The magic garden—View from the Palatine—Two churches—Monte Mario and the future—Rome from the Capitol—A centre of trade—The centre of Christendom—S. Angelo—A suggestive panorama—The Vatican Palace—Cruelty to tourists—A final glimpse.

ORTHODOXY has its merits, particularly in Rome, where it becomes an act of homage to the genius of the place. Let us therefore do as Rome does, and look at the city from the Pincio. The view-point is a balcony commanding a stately piazza. The belvedere and its approach from below were laid out during the few years of Rome's annexation to Napoleon's prophetic Kingdom of Italy; and a characteristic mark of the last Emperor of the West was thus set on a city which he never visited, but whose position in his realm was acknowledged in his son's title. The work is instinct with that feeling for the relation between ground and the buildings upon it from which a century later the logic of town-planning has been evolved, and its grandiose simplicity fitly commemorates an epoch in which Europe was cleared of accumulated lumber and refashioned according to bold, clear principles. In fact, the Pincio as Rome now knows it is not an ornamental garden, but a piece of

architecture, and so, like all good architecture, has atmosphere. It must be admitted, however, that its present quality is due to time. As originally planned, it was intended as a watch-tower confronting Rome at its extreme northern limit. But the modern city has swept beyond the Portal del Popolo, and is still advancing northwards up the Tiber Valley. Thus the Pincio has come to mark the dividing line between the Rome of yesterday and the Rome of to-day. To the south of it lies the centre of Christendom; to the north of it the capital of a modern national State. The hill has certainly not lost in effect by this change in its character.

The view commands the Tiber Valley and all the confusion of buildings crowded into it. Though it flows within a few yards of the Piazza del Popolo, the river is itself invisible, and, except from one point on the Aventine, is always an insignificant element in the Roman landscape. Cooped up as he is within the huge modern walls which have delivered Rome from the peril of his monstrous floods, Father Tiber is a poor creature to look upon. It seems incredible that the ancient Romans, with their sensibility to mere largeness, should have set this petty stream, whose turbid waters proclaim it an overgrown mountain torrent, on a level with such rivers as the Rhine, the Danube, and the Nile. But we must make allowances for local pride; for the fact that the Tiber is the only true river in Italy south of the Po; and for the more impressive appearance which it probably presented in classical times. There is evidence that the Imperial embankment was terraced in three levels, like a flight of broad steps, so that the normal channel of the river was wider than it is to-day, and, being less hemmed in by buildings, was better visible from the hills.

The panorama is sharply framed by the surrounding

heights ; and the eye, readily comprehending the whole topographical scheme, attributes to it a completeness which is, in fact, entirely lacking. But Rome is full of wiles.

From its nature the scene is impressive at all times, but for its charm it depends on effects of light. To the imaginative mind it appeals most, perhaps, on a fine morning in late spring, when the sun, still not too strong to be genial, envelops the city in a faint haze, while swallows dart above it in multitudinous spirals. Under this aspect Rome takes on a dreamy, timeless quality appropriate to its eternal name. With the high light of noon the charm vanishes ; under the sun's malignant rays the city exposes its dilapidations like so many sores. But even the central hours of the day sometimes hold a moment of rare beauty. In unsettled weather the clouds are wont to roll up from the sea during the morning and to be driven back by the wind which springs up in the afternoon, so that the rain, conveniently enough, falls when folk are at lunch. Rome is well worth a glance when the sun first lights upon it after a heavy shower while the storm clouds still trail their edges over the hills. Its domes gleam, its old buildings are all freshened, it puts on a transient air of youth. But the evening light consorts best with its venerable dignity, and the true Roman day is closed by the spectacle of the sun setting behind Monte Mario. Its dipping-point varies with the season. At the height of the year the sun is lost in a golden glow behind the Villa Mellini. For the next six months he sets each evening a fraction nearer to St. Peter's, and even passes well behind it before he begins at last to retrace his eternal curve. Sunset itself is the dramatic close of a display which lasts for the best part of an hour. It begins when the descending sun bathes the stolid modern city in romantic

orange light and casts a fascinating play of shadow over older Rome. At the supreme moment, when the west is golden, a radiant flush tinges the whole horizon, deepening to violet in the eastern sky. Then, while the short Roman twilight rapidly deepens and the sparrows chatter in the tree-tops below as at the end of *Peter Pan*, the colours of the city are melted into a harmony of browns which soften imperceptibly into greys. A few minutes more and lights begin to twinkle from windows in the town and up the slopes of the Janiculum, and the lighthouse on its summit flashes out its first alternating rays of red and white and green —the Italian tricolour—its nightly challenge to the Vatican. Soon all sense of distance is lost, and the Eternal City, seen in outline with only its domes still clear-cut against the sky, seems a toy of cardboard with pinpricks of light, a theatrical device such as any stage manager might imitate. This is another of Rome's wiles; for when the third act of *Tosca* gives the stage manager his chance, his effort is not convincing.

Twenty centuries ago it was already an established tradition to watch the sunset from the Pincio. It must have been at least in part for the sunset's sake that Lucullus chose the slope of the hill for the site of his villa in days when good conservative Romans were shaking their heads over the audacities of a young man named Julius Caesar. Barely a hundred years later, when the possession of Britain, "our one trans-oceanic province," was still a novelty in Rome, the Empress Messalina watched the sun set from the grounds of this same villa, her view-point being somewhat to the south of where we stand to-day. The present gardens—the Pincio has always been the hill of gardens —occupy the site of the villa of the Acilii Glabriones, to whom is ultimately due the wall which underlies

the hill, and still, as in the days of Belisarius, thrusts perilously outward at its north-eastern corner. The Acilii Glabriones were the one important Republican family which survived late into the Empire, and by the fourth century were the greatest aristocrats of their time. The characteristic irony of Rome, operating quietly through fifteen hundred years, has made a public garden of what was once the most exclusive place of resort in all the city. But throughout the changes the sunset has charmed human eyes with the same nightly magic.

The heavenly spectacle has remained unaltered, save, indeed, for cloud effects which never repeat themselves. Its earthly setting, on the contrary, has been transformed. If a Roman of the middle of the third century could look down upon the modern scene he would discern in its medley but one familiar detail. But one; yet by the middle of the third century Rome was already venerable, and had already celebrated her thousandth birthday. The one recognizable feature is the Column of Marcus Aurelius. Its position is unchanged, though, even in the fading light, our Roman could hardly fail to notice that it is now surmounted by one statue instead of two. Further prying may reveal two other familiar objects. The Pantheon still stands, but its present roof—and only the roof is visible from here—is the work of an eighth-century Pope. Hadrian's roof of gilded bronze, familiar to third-century eyes, may have surpassed it in elegance of outline as much as in glory of colour. Finally, there is the obelisk in the Piazza below. Our Roman may well wonder whether his eyes are playing him false, for when he last saw the obelisk it was standing in the Circus, on the other side of the Palatine.

These three objects apart, all is strange. There are indeed extant other monuments of the Imperial epoch.

But neither then nor now were they to be seen from here, the Column of Trajan perhaps excepted. The Church of the Holy Apostles shuts it off from view now, but its statue may then have been discernible above the brow of the Quirinal. Throw in Trajan's Column, then; but it may be doubted whether the addition will lessen the shock to our Roman's feelings. For what are four objects out of such a multitude—and of these four, one not even Roman. If our imaginary *revenant* were of a meditative turn, he may have reflected when he stood on the Pincio in the flesh that nothing of the grandeur before him was older than the Empire.[1] If so, he would have added proudly that in the interval Romans had learnt to build for ever. And so in truth they had, but allowance must be made for the amazing transiency of Rome's phases. Of modern Rome, the capital of the Italian Kingdom, solid enough to us, not one stone had been set upon another half a century ago.

This game of comparisons, though tempting enough, is generally too obvious to be played in Rome. Nevertheless, it is worth playing here for the sake of its dramatic finish. For, whether the view-point be approached directly from below, or by way of the flank of the hill past the Villa Medici, or from the back across the gardens by the viaduct from the Villa Borghese, the feature that instantly commands attention is St. Peter's; and it is again on St. Peter's that the eye is finally centred after ranging over the whole panorama. All its lines radiate from that great dome. Nature herself is made subordinate to it; for, set as it is between the Janiculum and Monte Mario, it seems the spring and origin of their

[1] The *Saepta Julia*, polling booths afterwards used as a market, at the farther end of the present Corso, were, indeed, begun by Caesar. But to the third-century mind Caesar was the first Emperor.

curves. Think it away, and Rome becomes incomplete, dismembered, not Rome at all; and a walk along the Janiculum gives ocular proof how disunitedly the city sprawls when that huge controlling mass is shut out from view. Yet St. Peter's is a newcomer among its monuments. The possibility of such a dome in such a place had not been dreamed of at the end of the first thousand years of Rome's life. To us it seems barely credible that without it Rome should have attained to the proud self-consciousness of that millenary festival. There is indeed a majestic vastness about its scene, the Colosseum. But the Colosseum lies in a hollow. It forms, as it were, a little world by itself, and makes no pretence to dominate Rome by imposing a central feature on its varied and confused topography. As a warning, however, against erroneous conclusions there still stands in the Forum, hard by the Senate House, an inscription which refers not to Rome, but to the Eternal City. It was set up early in the third century by Maxentius, the emperor whose fall was the prelude to triumphant Christianity. But the wheels of time revolve slowly, and even when the cycle of another thousand years was complete, St. Peter's as we know it was not yet foreshadowed. The site had indeed become the centre of Christendom, and a venerable church stood upon it. But a medley of shrines was clustered about it, so that it was rather the pool into which all streams of Christian thought emptied themselves than the visible source of Christian authority. Not till after the Reformation did the Church emphasize above all its other aspects that conception of itself as an ecumenical power, at once united and unifying, which St. Peter's so expressively translates into stone.

The seventeenth century had begun before the cathedral was finished. Nevertheless, except for its

shape—which is its architectural blemish—and for its function—for which its size makes it ill adapted—St. Peter's is thoroughly Roman in the old and most honourable sense of an epithet which sectarians have used despitefully. One of Hobbes' masterly phrases describes the papacy as "nothing but the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof." The "nothing but" is an exaggeration, but the epigram holds a truth which St. Peter's illuminates. The dome is inspired by the Pantheon, the nave by the vaulting of Constantine's Basilica, so that structurally St. Peter's is wholly classical. But it is also the cathedral of the Popes. Thus it fuses the old Empire with the new religion, and it is neither its size nor its position but its comprehensive spirit that stamps it as the very emblem of Rome.

Michael Angelo is unique among artists in that his work strikes us as inevitable, predestined. The creative mind is not discovered behind its creation, but is entirely fused in it. As he said himself of his statues, they were there in the marble, and he simply cut away the superfluous pieces. So with St. Peter's dome. It was there, in the space between the Janiculum and Monte Mario, and he simply made it apparent to ordinary eyes.[1] This was the feature of Rome which most impressed Maeterlinck—that Rome should have waited all those centuries for Michael Angelo to come and give it what it still lacked to make it perfect. Mark Twain, who cared for none of these things, ribaldly told his guide to go the whole hog and say that the Creator made Italy from designs by Michael Angelo. The truth is that Michael Angelo was great enough to decorate Italy in accordance with the designs of the

[1] It is true that the main idea is due to Bramante and the final result to Fontana. But it was Michael Angelo who rescued Bramante's design when in danger of maltreatment by lesser men, and it was his genius that added its crowning touch of grandeur.

Creator, so that in him, and in him only, art reaches its ideal. To set Raphael over against him, as the critics have sometimes done, is to compare a man with a demi-god.

The belvedere of the Pincio exhibits the meaning and dignity of St. Peter's to a degree unapproached by any other view-point; and on this account the panorama which it commands may be described with reason as all Rome. But in strict fact it is not all Rome. It is but the Rome of yesterday, the Rome of the period between the Reformation and the completion of Italian unity. There are, indeed, conspicuous elements which belong to other Romes—the Column of Marcus Aurelius at one extreme, the Victor Emmanuel monument at the other. Substantially, however, this view, with the variety of domes which is its special distinction, is the Rome of Sixtus V, and if St. Peter's were no more than its climax, St. Peter's would be wrong because monstrously out of scale. Fortunately the view includes one prominent feature which brings everything into harmony. Away in the frame of the picture to the south rises a height conspicuous for its crown of pines and cypresses. That height is the Palatine, where the oldest Rome had its seat and the greatest Rome its centre.

The view from the Janiculum well displays the commanding position held by the Palatine in the ancient city, particularly in relation to the fora below. The multitudes which thronged there must have felt their master's eye upon them. Caligula, a lunatic who never grew up, took a childish delight in the traffic beneath him, and let the people scramble for coppers which he threw down from the roofs of the buildings adjoining his palace. Nero, on the other hand, felt that the constant racket and bustle would drive him across the border line of sanity, and as he looked down

on the teeming crowds was moved to regret that the whole Roman people had not one neck. But Nero was a fastidious artist, forced by his birth to take up the burden of governing the world. He had the artist's desire for tranquillity, and it is not surprising that he wished all those troublesome folk somewhere else, except when he should be pleased to command their presence to give background to some impressive function, whether ceremony of State or the interpretation of a masterpiece. His attitude commands a certain sympathy, and he might have met with a better fate had he succeeded to the throne in the second century when the Augustan tradition of affability was extinct and the isolated position of the Emperor appreciated.

This by the way—a man's thoughts wander so easily when he leans over the parapet of the Janiculum with all Rome at his feet. The very multiplicity of tangents at which they go off is a tribute to the range and suggestiveness of the sight. In truth, the Janiculum is not visited for the sake of a lesson in classical topography, or for hints about the psychology of the early Caesars. It is visited because a walk along its ridges unfolds what is surely the most beautiful urban panorama in the world. There is no supreme view-point ; with momentary interruptions Rome is visible for the whole walk of something under a mile ; but there are four places where the road opens out as though in invitation to pause. First comes the piazza under S. Pietro in Montorio ; then the semicircular space in front of the Acqua Paola, though here the view is somewhat impeded by the buildings immediately beneath. Next succeeds the great platform, whose centre is filled by the Garibaldi statue ; this is the only point which commands an outlook on either side. Finally, a delightful retrospect of the whóle walk is given at the edge of the descent hard by Tasso's now lifeless oak-

tree, and just above the little open theatre where his academy once held its sessions. The nature of this last view makes it an effective conclusion to the whole pageant of Rome, and a beginning should therefore be made at the opposite or southern end. Advantage can then be taken of the introductory spectacle presented a little lower down at the top of the steps leading up from below. S. Paolo, afterwards hidden by the bulge of the hill, is visible from here. The great church, to whose extreme ugliness distance lends no enchantment, is an element in a curious sectional view which extends, with the Alban hills as a background, from the Capitol to the sea. To the sea is perhaps an exaggeration. Yet on clear days there is certainly a bright line along the extreme horizon, and Rome is barely twenty miles from the coast. Set, as it were, inside the projecting ridge of the Janiculum, the view forms a natural picture, and is even arranged pictorially. The statement may seem a paradox in that all the weight of detail is thrown towards the left side. But there are more ways than one of getting balance in a composition, and in this case the weight on the left is counteracted by the immense spaciousness of the view to the right. Finally, the sharp contrast between the two halves of the picture is smoothed away by the Alban hills, which move towards the foreground as they diminish in height.[1]

In front of S. Pietro in Montorio the urban prospect opens to its full extent and ranges from the Aventine to S. Angelo. Of grander compass than the view from the Pincio, it has a grander frame—nothing less than the whole system of the Alban and Sabine hills. The varied light that plays upon them helps to give

[1] Of all natural panoramas known to me, none so obviously invites transmission to canvas; yet oddly enough I have never seen a picture of it.

the walk its persistent charm. Occasionally, after rain, they are seen very sharply, so that it is possible to pick out the towns on their flanks. More generally a tissue of enveloping haze, itself of uncertain transparency, reveals them in manifold gradations of distinctness; and sometimes they blend fantastically with the clouds that hang about them. But except when the sky is entirely overcast with low heavy clouds, a certain firmness of outline distinguishes an irregular isolated mountain far away to the north. This is Soracte, which still wears its mantle of snow into the late spring as in Horace's day.

> Videsne ut alta stet nive candidum
> Soracte ?—

the syllables are as beautiful as the sight.

In the foreground lies Rome, and at this distance the geography books are seen to be right in describing the hills on which it lies as projections from a tableland. The tableland now appears, its narrow transverse valleys being lost as a continuous line in the middle distance, curving forward at either end to form the Aventine on the south and the Pincio on the north. In the centre the Quirinal, Capitoline, and Palatine thrust out strongly, the last as large as the two others put together—it is, in fact, a double hill—and conspicuous for its greenery. Here is the skeleton of the ancient city, and though the Tiber is invisible trees indicate its course and tempt the mind to the effort—inevitable in such a place—to crown the heights with glittering imaginary temples and reconstruct the splendour of Imperial Rome.

A few yards farther on, by the Acqua Paola, a very different picture is called up. The Castle of S. Angelo, hitherto barely visible on the extreme left, now begins to stand out for the great dominating fortress that it

was. With the advance of a few yards in space a thousand years have been traversed in time. To Rome as we see it now, the saying visibly applies that who holds S. Angelo holds the city—a shrunken, crowded, turbulent city, huddled into the river valley, readily to be imagined from this place. The Janiculum, appreciating the effect that it has made, next prepares the charming surprise of yet another sudden transition. Garibaldi, to whose liberating sword Italy owes her unity, looks down on Rome from the noblest site that the capital can offer—a site which would be well worthy of a nation's hero, even without the crowning fitness of association with the most romantic episode in a career that was all romance. On this ridge Garibaldi fought for the ideal of a Roman Republic—dead since Caesar's day. But old feuds are healed now, and from his lofty platform the hero looks across Rome to the glittering king set in his marble colonnade on the Capitol. Nor is he less happy in his background. Even in that youthful enterprise Garibaldi fought not for Rome but for Italy, and as he sits here on his bronze horse he has Italy behind him. The platform has a parapet on either hand, and on its western edge a gracious landscape is unfolded. Green undulating pleasances fill the foreground—the garden of a Roman prince—and behind, high against the sky-line, a stately row of unbroken pines. It is a corner of suburban Rome, but it is also an epitome of rural Italy, and the figure of Garibaldi is felicitously placed to link it with the historic city beyond the opposite parapet.

A self-conscious bit of ground is the Janiculum. Right at its end, by a piece of deliberate coquetry, it turns upon itself and exposes its whole flank, so that the eye runs along the full length of the walk, past the Acqua Paola and the church and monastery just below it, and out into the full expanse of the Campagna to

the south. Then, as if ashamed of its final touch of vanity, the road plunges abruptly into a slum.

Romans themselves do not frequent the Janiculum. They prefer the Pincio, mainly, no doubt, because it adjoins the aristocratic quarter of modern Rome, but partly perhaps because it looks down upon the centre of the city's present-day life and excludes the overwhelming memorials of the past. To strangers within Rome's gates, on the other hand, the Janiculum walk easily becomes a habit, and for the sake of its persistent charm they regularly brave the long journey in a slow, crowded Roman tram. This charm does not lie in the varied light effects which give fascination to the Pincio, for from the Janiculum Rome is only seen with proper clearness by afternoon light on a fine day. There is, however, one light effect to be enjoyed here also. As the sun sinks, a shadow moves steadily over the bright city, obscuring its details one by one, until nothing is left distinct except the French Academy, still brilliant in its high place on the Pincio across the valley. (What a place for artists to live in; Nero himself might envy them!) But this very fact that Rome ceases to be worth a glance when the sun is gone from it is the key to the inexhaustible attraction of the view. As seen from this ridge, Rome is far enough away to exhibit all its multitudinous elements, but every one of them is sharp and clear, and can be apprehended with an ease which no familiarity can make other than surprising to Northern eyes. It may be that this distinctness of the southern landscape determined the course of ancient philosophy by its presentation in material fact of the problem of the relation between the one and the many so congenial to Greek metaphysical thought.

Rome submits the issue with a beautiful precision that charms the eye without tormenting the mind.

There is no doubt about its oneness. Even without St. Peter's to unite it, this is still Rome. But neither is there any doubt about the manifoldness of the many, as complete in time as in space. There, very small, but as clear as though seen through the wrong end of a telescope, is the gilt effigy of Victor Emmanuel, and close beside it, like a pointer, is Trajan's Column; between them, say, 200 yards and close on two thousand years. It is even possible to play games with the many—to note the curious shifts and changes in the relative position of its constituents, as when, for example, from a point close to the lighthouse, the dome of the synagogue appears to be framed by the wall of the Colosseum. For several afternoons good sport may be derived from the game of spotting the column. The column is that of Marcus Aurelius, and the pleasure of the game is enhanced by its flippant treatment of a personage who took himself so solemnly. The column is none too easy to spot. Only the top of it is visible, and it is sometimes almost lost against a background of buildings. But, except where trees in the foreground block the view, it can be distinguished from all parts of the walk save from a point in front of S. Pietro in Montorio, where it is blotted out by the dome of S. Andrea della Valle and from a point near the Garibaldi statue, where it is masked by the grotesque tower of the university, which elsewhere is a helpful pointer.

Another game, with an agreeable touch of irreverence about it, is hide-and-seek with St. Peter's. A glimpse of the dome can be obtained by deft manoeuvring in the Piazza of S. Pietro in Montorio. Then it is lost to sight for a while save when, with a touch of skittishness unexpected in a structure of such massive dignity, it exhibits its lantern over the trees in front of the Acqua Paola. Its absence is felt when the full view

of Rome broadens out again from the Garibaldi platform, and it is therefore most satisfactory to find it lying quietly in wait on the western side of the parapet. But it reserves its best effect for the climax of the walk. First the glance along the whole Janiculum flank with Rome below. Next a dozen steps forward and on the left—peep-bo !—St. Peter's and the Vatican and all the splendours of the Pope's home—scarcely tarnished by certain hideous red-roofed buildings in the foreground. In fact, on the one side Rome, on the other side the complement to Rome.

Such frivolities relieve the mind from the weight of historical associations with which the Janiculum would otherwise oppress it. To say nothing of the wonderful panorama below, crowded with detail like a mediaeval carving and yet compact as an Attic frieze, the hill itself has a long and honourable record stretching back almost to the legendary beginnings of the city. Here the struggling Latin community maintained an outpost to watch for the approach of the Etruscan foe. A black flag was hoisted over the fort, and when the flag was struck the citizens rushed to arms. The Romans being a conservative people, the flag continued to float long after Rome was mistress of Etruria, and waves for an instant over the page of history when the Republic was entering its last agony. Caesar had already begun to play his pranks with the constitution, and the infuriated reactionaries took refuge in political obstruction. One day when the Assembly was in session for the transaction of important public business they lowered the flag on the Janiculum, and so compelled its immediate adjournment. It made little difference to Caesar, whose contempt for the traditional forms helped to cost him his life.

In Imperial times the Janiculum became a residential suburb, and a famous view-point—an anticipation of

its present state. This phase in the ridge's history is represented by a bit of Roman concrete and by a literary memorial of greater note. Late in the first century a young Spanish provincial named Martial came to Rome to make his fortune, encouraged, maybe, by the remarkable position which a Spanish family had won for itself in Nero's Rome. Martial never liked the capital, which appears to have brought out the worst side of him, but he had a gift for light verse appreciated by the public, and was quite shameless in giving the public what it liked. (To-day he would have conducted a popular newspaper, but in the first century the proletariat did not read and the reading public liked style.) One of the relations on whom the poet sponged had a house on the Janiculum, and Martial, doubtless in return for hospitality received, threw off a few lines in praise of the view. The modern municipality has been happily inspired to inscribe a stave from this little poem on a slab set up on the Janiculum. The touch is more Florentine than Roman, and it may be that the authorities are a little ashamed of a digression at once literary and archaeological. At any rate, the slab is left—like the statues under the London County Council—for the rain to keep clean, and is all bedraggled with half-obliterated signatures. The mania for misplaced autography rages mightily in Italy, and has not even respected the statues in the Vatican.

But the chief monument on the Janiculum recalls two very diverse aspects of Christian thought. In the cloisters of S. Pietro in Montorio is a model—the work of Bramante himself—of a typical Renaissance building. It represents a miniature dome supported by columns, and its unique scale enhances its architectural interest. The tempietto, as it is called, marks the spot where a late tradition placed the crucifixion of St. Peter. According to another tradition, so old

as to be almost contemporary with the event, St. Peter was crucified in the Neronian Circus. This Circus, really the work of Caligula, lay just to the south of St. Peter's. Its centre was marked by the obelisk which now stands on the Piazza, and a slab in the pavement of the road, near the sacristy, shows the spot from which this obelisk was removed. How then did the scene ever come to be shifted up the hill?

Professor Lanciani, whose book, *Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome,* is full of rare information, has laid bare the workings of the mediaeval mind. In the first place the crucifixion of St. Peter was reported as having taken place "in monte Vaticano," and the reference to a hill misled a generation which had lost all sense of engineering, and could not conceive that so great a space had been artificially levelled. Secondly, the scene was placed "inter duos metas," between the two turning-points of the circus. Now the mediaeval Roman applied the names "meta Romuli" and "meta Remi" to two pyramidal tombs, one of which, the pyramid of Cestius, still stands. The other has now disappeared, but it was near S. Angelo, and is shown on the great doors which Filarete made for Eugenius IV and which now close the central entrance to St. Peter's. Accordingly the inference was drawn that St. Peter met his martyr's death on the Janiculum at the spot where the ridge is crossed by an imaginary line linking the two tombs, and it is over this spot that Bramante built his tempietto. The church in whose cloister it stands is itself a Spanish foundation, and the present building bears an inscription of Philip IV, the king whom Velasquez painted. On the school adjoining are a few words in the Spanish tongue. At once, like and unlike the Italian, they read oddly here. The sight of them deflects the eye to the building in which the third of the great Latin nations contributes to the

glory of Rome. The Villa Medici stands conspicuous but remote on the Pincio at the outer edge of the scene, and it is typical of the difference between the two peoples that Spain should be represented by a church and France by an Academy of Arts.

Martial, Bramante, Tasso, Garibaldi. There remains a still later phase of Rome, and it is represented by the lighthouse whose tricoloured flashes proclaim that a national State has established its capital within the patrimony of St. Peter. So far it is the latest of the monuments by which the Janiculum pays tribute to the historic past, but hard by S. Onofrio a glorious site remains to be filled, and here, maybe, Rome will one day build her war memorial.

The view from the Janiculum is comprehensive, intimate, and literal. The view from the Aventine is restricted, elusive, and fantastic. As such it consorts with the spirit of the hill. Only on the Aventine is it possible to recapture something of the solitude which brooded over Rome in the Middle Ages. Vineyards still cover its slopes—one of them bounded by the crumbling walls of a mediaeval fortress—and the tide of modern building has swept around and beyond it. One edge has, indeed, endured the intrusion of modern bricks and mortar, but their purpose was not antagonistic to the Aventine's peace. Beyond the line of older churches which crowd its western front there rises the new Benedictine monastery of S. Anselmo —a work of solid dignity, though a trifle too low for its mass. Its neighbouring churches are all rich in atmosphere. At the head of the line stands Santa Sabina, built with columns from the temple which it replaced. The latest restoration has stripped it of its mediaeval additions, and it is now Rome's purest example of an early Christian basilica. St. Dominic once dwelt in its monastery, and an orange-tree which

he brought from Spain and planted here has been kept alive by successive graftings of younger slips. That the neighbouring cloisters should now be occupied by the municipal hospital for contagious diseases is artistically lamentable, but is eloquent of the hill's isolation.

Beyond the hospital is S. Alessio. The church lies on the farther side of a courtyard, its façade redeemed from insignificance by a marble portal. This was once the entrance to some magnificent classical building —probably a temple, though in the later Empire there were opulent private houses on the hill—and its edge is decorated with great richness and beauty. The plain white marble of the main door jambs sets off this moulding to advantage, but the mediaeval mind abhorred empty space, and so was moved to insert inside the classical decoration a border of gorgeous mosaic. The church is also noteworthy for its cloister, small, very dainty, and exceptionally clean. The place is now an institution for the blind, and something of the neatness and precision so congenial to blindness has been imparted to its structure.

Both S. Sabina and S. Alessio intensify the impression of the Aventine, and after leaving them the inexperienced visitor is tempted to go back the way he has come for fear lest what succeeds them may mar the effect. Let him advance with hopeful courage, for the daintiest sight on the Aventine lies ahead. Beyond S. Alessio the road broadens into a little piazza, whose walls are most fantastically decorated. This unreal spot is the vestibule to the home of an Order, itself now almost a legend. The Maltese Cross on the walls reveals the secret. Here dwelt, and still dwell, the Knights of St. John, whose church, by the way, exhausts —perhaps even transcends—the utmost possibilities of stucco work. Decorators of cinema theatres should

visit it and bow their diminished heads. The church does its utmost to maintain the extravagant note struck by the view; for view there is at last, thanks to a break in the dull walls which have so far bounded the road. It is the tiniest break, only large enough to admit a key, and is, in fact, a keyhole. The self-conscious tourist applies his eye, feeling rather like Alice in Wonderland, and like Alice looks into a magic garden. In front stretches an arched avenue, really a monstrous hedge whose sides meet at the top, and at the end of the avenue, neatly filling the open space, is—St. Peter's. One gasps at the sheer impertinence of treating the enormous and majestic cathedral as a convenient background to a piece of garden design. Obviously it cannot be real; but the whole scene is enchanted, and the enchantment is fortunately lasting. No incantation is needed to open the portal with the wonderful keyhole. A bell is rung just as though it were an ordinary door. The view-point is at the end of the avenue, and on his way to it the visitor may notice a tortoiseshell cat of extraordinary colouring resident in the garden—doubtless an enchanted princess. She bears a distant resemblance to the gardener, presumably a relative who shares her enchantment, and meanwhile keeps his garden exquisitely, filling it in the early spring with a delicious odour of violets. (Since this was written the gardener has given the cat away because she would catch the birds. It would appear therefore that she is really an evil genie, and the gardener an enchanted prince seeking to break her magic. In revenge she has afflicted him with sciatica.)

The view from the belvedere is almost worthy of the fairylike approach. It would, of course, be preposterous to walk through such a garden as this and find a city at the end of it—even such a city as Rome. Rome, however, is appropriately remote. A stately

curve of the Tiber parts us from its realities, and this is the only Roman panorama in which the Tiber fills the foreground. Here, where it is most wanted, the river seizes its moment, refuses to flow ignominiously between retaining walls, and, by a fine piece of self-assertion, dominates the scene. It only remains for Father Tiber to rise in flood and sweep away the perfectly hideous modern building which here desecrates his farther bank. While he is about it he might also deal with the bridge which has replaced the old Ponte Rotto.

Although the river itself is soon lost to sight, the view commands the river valley, and is fitly framed by the hills which border the Latin plain on the north. There is, indeed, no point in Rome where the economic importance of the place is so apparent to the eye. Further emphasis is given to this geographical factor by the relative insignificance of the buildings. St. Peter's is indeed visible, but appears almost incredibly distant, and the only other monuments of any prominence are the roof of the Pantheon and the tower of the Capitol. Surprisingly little is seen of the Victor Emmanuel memorial, but that little testifies more clearly than any other view to the truly Roman solidity of the huge work.

The Aventine also commands another view in the opposite direction, and as the belvedere is the balcony of a fashionable restaurant, material and aesthetic enjoyment can be happily combined. But for all its beauty this view is no more than a secondary variant of the prospect from the Palatine. It is true that the impressive arcades of the Palatine itself are conspicuous in the foreground, whereas the Palatinian belvedere rests upon them, and thus can only convey the barest hint of their height and scale. But their place is taken by a building even more impressive and more characteristically Roman—the Colosseum.

The view from the Palatine depends for its effect on a subtle atmosphere, which no description of its elements can convey. Nowhere in Rome is it so easy to be absorbed utterly into the past, and it is just as well to turn round now and again and glance at St. Peter's directly behind by way of recovering an accurate temporal perspective. It is all the harder to attain because the past in which this view is steeped is itself a blend of three centuries, the first, the sixth, and the twelfth. These three periods are respectively suggested by the three buildings which are prominent in the foreground, the Colosseum on the left and the Churches of S. Gregorio Magno and SS. Giovanni and Paolo towards the centre, and their suggestion is the more potent since no other buildings have any prominence at all. For the main quality of this view is that in it nature predominates. In front is the ridge of the Caelian abundantly planted with trees. Away to the right the Campagna opens out on either side the Via Appia, until the vista is closed by the Alban hills. In all this part of the scene architecture fills a subordinate and decorative function. The line of the hills is pleasantly broken by the towns scattered about their flanks ; and a wonderfully beautiful effect is obtained when the afternoon sunshine turns these man-made intrusions on the Alban verdure into softly glowing masses of white. The Campagna, in turn, is adorned by the battlemented towers of the Porta S. Sebastiano, by the noble circular fortress-tomb of Cecilia Metella, by a sequence of campanili—S. Balbina, SS. Nereo ed Achilleo and S. Cesareo—and by the clear straight line of the Appian Way. All these points help to give perspective, and nearer in, to give scale, is the oblong mass of Caracalla's Baths. On the left there is no vista. By one of the contrasts which Rome loves the space is filled by the vast bulk of the Colosseum, whose

dimensions are all the more conspicuous because the disappearance of the western half of the arcade discloses the whole interior of the ellipse. A final touch of proportion is given by the surviving fragment of the Aqueduct of Claudius in the gap between the Palatine and the Caelian. Its five lofty arches exhibit the depth of the valley, which it crosses, and emphasize the scale of the Colosseum.

If the churches in the centre be overlooked and attention concentrated on the views to the right and left, it is amazing how easily the centuries are spanned. The Flavian Amphitheatre reconstructs itself even to the least imaginative eye, and towards the south the campanili of the churches are converted into the belvederi of suburban palaces, the line of the Via Appia takes on a further touch of sharpness, the glow from the painted house-walls in the hill towns is intensified to the brighter gleam from the stuccoed front of Roman villas, and lo! the transformation is accomplished and ancient Rome is with us in all its splendour.

The reconstruction is subconsciously helped by the glimpses of the modern city on the left. Thanks to the bulk of the Colosseum, the nearer houses are effectively hidden, and the buildings which fringe the sky line of the Esquiline and the Quirinal appear at this distance so solid and so undistinguished that they might well be blocks of the mansion-flats of Juvenal's day. There remain two details, themselves tiny enough, which bring out a characteristic of the ancient city quite lost nowadays. Imperial Rome was mistress of all the wealth of the East, and became orientalized to an extent which shocked the more conservative inhabitants; and it so chances that these two details add a distinctively Oriental touch. Just to the left of the Colosseum, in front of S. Bonaventura, rises a palm of unusual

height for Rome. This is a flagrant bit of orientalism, but the other touch is more subtle. Not far from the Lateran there has been built a modern church and monastery of S. Antony. The church has a spire, and the steeple is decorated with coloured tiles. The top of this steeple rises like a minaret between the trees beyond the Colosseum, and its blues increase the illusion by their hint of Persian ceramics.

Into this easily imagined scene of dead and gone magnificence the two churches must needs presently obtrude themselves. Must needs, because of all the churches in Rome none have equal personal interest for Englishmen. The Church of S. Gregorio Magno as we see it now is the work of the later Renaissance, but its name sufficiently proclaims it for what it is—the beginning of the long road which ended at Canterbury. In front of the church Augustine and his monks received the Pope's blessing as they left Rome on the mission he had assigned to them. All Englishmen know the story, first written down for them by the Venerable Bede, of the casual episode which led to the recovery of their island for Christendom. It chanced one day that Gregory, not yet Pope, but already interested in church music, went down to the slave market with an eye to possible recruits for the papal choir. There his attention was caught by the fair hair and blue eyes of some lads from the remote northern island. His austere personality was overtaken by one of its gentler moods, and as was his wont in such tempers, he permitted himself to make puns. But it was not Gregory's way to let any matter pass with a jest, and out of his jocular comparison between Angles and angels was born his resolve to have the Gospel preached on the farther side of the Channel. The story gains immensely in impressiveness when it is seen that the mission started at the very foot of the

hill whence, nearly six centuries earlier, had issued the order for the island's political conquest.

The Church of SS. Giovanni and Paolo turns towards the Palatine an apse of red brick, whose line is felicitously broken half-way up by a dainty marble colonnade resembling the triforia of English cathedrals.[1] The resemblance is not quite accidental, for this bit of arcading is the work of Nicolas Breakspear, the only Englishman ever elected Pope. Nor can it have been an accident that Adrian IV, desiring to repair some of the damage done in Robert Guiscard's sack of Rome, should have bidden his builders labour at the church which lay nearest to the birthplace and home of Gregory the Great.

Such are the historical associations of this, the most serenely beautiful view in Rome, and as the reflective eye wanders from the amphitheatre to the churches and from the churches to the Appian Way, the mind becomes penetrated with a sense of Rome's various enduring greatness, until the ear seems to catch the echoes of that sonorous name reverberating throughout time.

What the Palatine does for the past, Monte Mario does for the future. It, too, withdraws veils. The long, straggling hill which will one day take the Pincio's place is occupied, as the Pincio once was, by scattered villas. One of them still bears the royal arms of England over its gate. It was the home of the last of the Stuarts. Cut up as it is into private

[1] The effect is similar but the intention is different. The half-dome which covers the inside of the apse is protected on the outside by a flat, inclined roof. To support it the outside wall had to be carried up above the curve of the half-dome. But as the roof is light, to carry the wall up solidly would be a waste of good brick. The arcade gives sufficient support, and what is right structurally is also right aesthetically. Unfortunately the effect was soon overdone, particularly at Pisa, where these galleries are a mannerism and cover whole fronts of churches. I cannot recall a similar English apse. English builders preferred to make their east ends square, not apsidal.

properties, the hill boasts no accepted view-point, and a trip to it is not without the discomforts of exploration. First comes a long tram-ride through the dullest quarter of Rome. Then a walk up a road whose thick dust is repeatedly stirred up by motor lorries. The road winds down the hillside and along it the mediaeval emperors passed from their camp on the summit to their coronation in St. Peter's. So long a march in full ceremonial dress must have been a most exhausting ordeal, and it is not to be wondered at that tempers gave way and that the Imperial escort readily came to blows with the Roman populace. Fortunately the modern visitor need not tread in the steps of the emperors throughout the meanderings of the Via Triomfale. A stairway cuts off a couple of its bends, and an adequate view-point presents itself at its head.

The prospect is large. It embraces all Rome from S. Maria Maggiore and the Lateran in the east to St. Peter's in the west, while to the south the view of the Campagna is interrupted only by the ridge of the Aventine. But the feature of this view is not its extent, but its indication of the tendency of modern Rome. The city has now reached a turning-point in its history. The circuit of its walls no longer suffices to contain it. Its population has grown rapidly during the last half-century. The kingdom of Italy centralized its government in the capital, and sites vacant for centuries were covered by its gigantic ministries. Economic development followed, and two new residential quarters came into existence. One of these, on the eastern slope of the Pincio, is the " West end " of Rome. Something not far short of an east end has sprung up across the river. Here a showy, vulgar quarter seems to be relapsing towards slum. It is built on the water-meadows by S. Angelo. The district's melodious name, Prati di Castello, is all that is now left of them.

This ground has never before been built over, and it is remarkable how Rome, with its natural conservatism, has refused to cover it with its atmosphere. Prati di Castello might be Chicago, and the wonder is that Romans should ever trouble to go to America when they can get the same effect by taking a No. 7 tram from the Piazza Venezia.

Prati could never have become what it is had it not been outside the walls of the Leonine city, but up till now it has remained a solitary excrescence, and Rome proper has kept substantially within its traditional limits. Here, however, as elsewhere, the war has left a house famine in its train, and the builders are at work outside almost every gate. The city is growing on all sides, but the view from Monte Mario makes it clear that the main trend of development is towards the north. In expanding up the Tiber Valley Rome is only following Imperial and Renaissance precedent. But whereas Imperial Rome kept to the hills and Renaissance Rome filled the valley only up to the Porta del Popolo, modern Rome is swarming into the broad plain under Monte Mario. From the hill its advance is very manifest—an army of solid square blocks of buildings, the foremost still encased in scaffolding. It is instructive, too, to notice how a thick tentacle of houses has thrust itself right round the Pincio and is beginning to creep down towards the river. Even more instructive is the foreground towards St. Peter's. Nothing could be more up to date. The view includes five factory chimneys and a quantity of land in the derelict state, which proclaims ripeness for building. Adjusting itself to this fringe of modernity, the city behind assumes its most recent aspect. The most prominent urban feature is the colonnade of the Victor Emmanuel monument. A touch of characteristic Roman irony hides, however,

the statue of the king, usually so conspicuous. It is masked—the modern touch again—by the roof of the Law Courts, a building as ambitious as it is unsatisfactory.

The relationship of this nascent new Rome with the mountain overhanging it calls for the attention of expert town planners. Already precious opportunities have been missed. Prati has been allowed to grow in haphazard fashion, and the approach to the hill is masked by mean houses. Still, the position is not hopeless, particularly as the building operations on Monte Mario are beginning to arouse public interest. The Americans, attracted no doubt by the proximity of Rome's Chicago, have selected the hill for the site of a great institution, and a rumour has obtained currency that this institution is to include a Protestant place of worship of sky-scraping proportions, which would put St. Peter's into its proper place. The rumour appears groundless, but its circulation has made Rome realize how closely its future is linked with Monte Mario. Happily there should be no great difficulty in earmarking a part of it for an urban "lung." A good stretch of the summit is occupied by a military fort which not even the most reactionary general could now claim as necessary to the defence of the city. Since civilians are not permitted to pass its portals, and since the Tommies quartered within it are unobservant of its aesthetic qualities, the field of view which it commands must be treated as a military secret. But view or no view, and even War Office or no War Office, that fort will be a public park before A.D. 3000.

There remains yet one more notable feature of this prospect. As seen from Monte Mario, Rome appears startlingly small. Even St. Peter's ceases to be overwhelming. This, again, is a typically modern touch.

The scale of life was never so large as now. Our cities are bigger, our streets broader, our buildings higher than ever before. The Rome of the future will be true to type. Its blocks will rise to a good ten stories, and swift trams will bustle along its spacious avenues innocent of switchback inclines. But it will not be the Rome of history.

A city like Rome which has acquired the habit of climbing hills and turning round to look at itself will naturally make view-points for itself when nature has failed to provide them. The most remarkable of these view-points is the Testaccio, the great mound of broken pottery near the river below the Aventine. Unfortunately it is not now accessible, having been taken over by the military. There are, however, three other view-points, each of which has its own historic interest. Of these three views, that from the tower of the Capitol is the lordliest. Hence are seen all the Romes that have so far existed, so that the tower seems to be the central point round which the city has gradually pivoted itself throughout the ages. Thus ancient Rome to the east gradually passes into mediaeval Rome towards the south, and this in turn is blended with Renaissance Rome in the west, until it gives place to the latest Rome of all to the north.

This vision of historical development corresponds very largely with actual fact. It is true that in course of time and by steps traceable from here the heart of the city has shifted clean round the Capitoline rock. Once all roads led to the Forum, and modern streets, 20 feet or so above the ancient levels, still radiate from that grass-grown, historic rectangle. Their course serves to show how admirable was the situation of the Flavian Amphitheatre. On no other point, not even on the Circus, could the idle population from all quarters so readily converge. But there is something

older than the Forum. From the valley of the Amphitheatre the eye roves over the Palatine, and in the next depression—the Velabrum—is struck by one of those contrasts which Rome loves. From the resort of a bloodthirsty proletariat the city is transformed into a " nodal point " of obvious economic importance. The river is visible—the only river, be it again remembered, on the west coast of Italy—in its stately curve before it enters the gap it has cut for itself between the Aventine and the Janiculum. The topography speaks for itself. Here is the place where trade must needs be controlled, whether it be trade across the Tiber Valley or trade between the coast and the interior. These are visibly the cross roads of Central Italy, and here on the low-lying ground of the Velabrum and the Forum itself the earliest traders—Minoans, Phoenicians, Etruscans—dim names of adventurous travellers—must have marketed their goods in the remote beginnings of European time. The mind is impressed afresh by the true eternal quality of Rome as the eye notes that this must needs have been the setting of something older than the earliest settlements of migratory shepherds from the Alban hills, something more mysterious and more moving, full of the indomitable voyaging spirit of man. Here was Rome when Rome, so far from beginning to accomplish its high destiny as the centre of the world, was itself something dim behind the ranges, an adventure beyond the confines of the known world, attainable only at the price of encounters with monsters of the land and of the deep, one-eyed Cyclopes and many-headed Scyllas, and all the multitudinous nameless terrors of the wild. And then the eye sweeps on and the centuries slip by. This view is a journey in the time machine. The dome of St. Peter's comes into sight, and at once the topographical development of the city becomes clear. The dome rises above

the grave of a Galilean fisherman who turned the eyes of Romans away from the wild excitements of the Circus and Amphitheatre, and the Imperial splendours of the Palatine, and the stirring associations of the Forum. Their dwellings followed the direction of their eyes, and from this view-point mediaeval Rome is seen flowing like a tide towards the centre of Christendom.

The problem forthwith suggests itself how Rome ever escaped from so compelling an attraction. It is a problem which cannot be solved from here. Very vaguely, for the view is in large part masked by the back of the Victor Emmanuel monument, is discerned Renaissance Rome, the Rome of the church domes seen in its glory from the Pincio. But what is manifest from here is the exuberance with which this Renaissance Rome, once free from its subjection to the sacred ground across the river, has expanded and is still expanding in the free territory towards the north. In this impetuous development is seen the hand of a magician. Perchance a visit to the ground about the invisible Piazza Venezia—modern Rome's Bank and Piccadilly Circus in one—will make it possible to put a name to him. But the piazza lies low, and our present business is with heights.

Though Rome itself chooses nowadays to grow northwards, its artificial view-points follow the normal rule of urban growth, and lie in succession westward of one another. After the Capitol, S. Angelo. A walk round the balcony encircling the lower story of the structure which later builders set on Hadrian's base sufficiently explains the castle's importance in the city's mediaeval history. It is not very high, this balcony—the approach to it imposes on quickly wearying legs none of the strain inflicted by the ascent of the Capitoline Tower; and quite a short further climb leads to the uppermost

terrace. But the fortress dominates. It commands Rome, though the Rome which it commands is small. As seen from S. Angelo, Rome lies within the broken arc of a circle. The arc is formed by the Pincio, the Quirinal, the Capitol, the Aventine, and the Janiculum, and its chord is the river which, starting away from the Janiculum, sweeps across the front of the castle like a moat, and, close at hand though it is, quite fails to dominate the foreground, but unobtrusively frames in the scene. The fortress itself stands at the point where a line from the Capitol to the river meets a line from the river to St. Peter's ; and, in spite of the many clearances of the last half-century, it is still clear that the mediaeval city ran along the former of these two lines. The houses still cluster thickly and unsystematically, and are unbroken by broad avenues. The view indeed owes its physical charm to the medley of roofs in the foreground, roofs at all levels and all angles and in every shade of brown and yellow and grey.

But its ultimate appeal does not lie in any physical quality—not even in the fact that from this point alone the dome of St. Peter's is seen to rise in its full pride above the cathedral piazza, whereas elsewhere Michael Angelo's drum is hidden by the unhappy prolongation of the nave. Like some of the great lines in literature, this view owes its power to the suggestions involved in it. What is here involved, inevitably, is the whole crowded tumultuous, fantastic history of mediaeval Rome, and this partly because of the castle's dramatic situation and partly because it was itself the scene of the stirring episodes which opened and closed the period. The Rome of the Emperors passes into the Rome of the Popes with the war in which Greek and Goth fought for the city, and the Greeks beat off the Goths by flinging down on them the statues which Hadrian had set up to grace

his tomb.[1] And almost exactly one thousand years later the Rome of the Popes—the unquestioned Popes of unassailable authority—passed in its turn when Clement VII, a pitiful refugee in S. Angelo, looked down on his city put to the sword by the troops of the most Christian Emperor.

St. Peter's is the monument of the new Rome and the new papacy which arose after the sack of 1527. The building points backward and forward—backward to the full glory of the Renaissance which prompted its construction, and forward to the territorial papal State—one among the composite elements of Italy—which endured until 1870. The dome itself is sheer genius; the palace which it adjoins is cultured territorial despotism; and the contrast is significantly brought by the view from the gallery of the lantern. The outstanding quality of the view is its vastness. No natural prospect equals its range, which comprehends the whole Latin plain with the hills and sea which bound it. Such a view seems more proper to a balloon than to a building. It intimidates. The terrific quality of Michael Angelo's genius is upon it. None but he would have aspired to lift a dome to such a sovereign height. It transgresses the average human mean. It shows itself a veritable tower of Babel, so lofty that the details of the prospect beneath it are lost. Rome is not seen but confusedly apprehended, and this defect is heightened by the fact that access to the lantern is restricted to the morning. The city then lies in the full glare of the sun, and the visitor's eyes are harassed by its beams. A very different

[1] Posterity has rightly judged that the wars of Justinian's reign are of no great moment to it. But they happen to have been recorded by a historian with a strong sense of the dramatic and some perception of deeper underlying issues. Such writers are always rare, and rarest of all in the arid waste of mediaevalism. Procopius is worth reading—is, indeed, almost the last classical writer who makes really good reading. He has been translated in the Loeb series.

effect would be obtained if it were possible to climb the lantern in the late afternoon at the hours when the view from the Janiculum is at its best.

But if St. Peter's is useless for the study of all Rome, it is invaluable for the study of the Vatican itself. The complexities of the huge Palace become unravelled. It is seen to form a coherent mass attractively set off by its gardens with their curious blend of formal bedding and natural forest, the whole enriched by the play of falling water without which no Italian garden would be complete. A first glance at the Palace, seen below as though in plan, at once confirms the suspicion that visitors to the Sistine Chapel are treated with unnecessary cruelty. The chapel itself is seen nestling against the north aisle of the cathedral, and it is obvious that the nearest access to it would be through the Porta di Bronzo in the piazza. But this, after all, is the main door of the Palace, and it is hardly to be wondered at that tourists and students should be compelled to enter elsewhere. Unhappily elsewhere implies a walk round the vast bulk of the nave, transept, and apse of the cathedral. This walk, as can be seen clearly from the eyrie in the lantern, eventually passes right underneath the chapel. There is accordingly no reason for its further prolongation. Nevertheless, it is prolonged up the whole enormous length of the great courtyard as far as the entrance to the museum. Once inside, the visitor mounts to an upper corridor, and must then retrace his steps along the length of the courtyard until he reaches the chapel, and the whole tiring detour must be repeated when the chapel is left. Up in the lantern, the eye ranges in amazement over the extent of ground to be covered. There is not the least structural necessity for this ordeal. On the contrary, a door lies directly under the vestibule giving access to the chapel, and if visitors were admitted

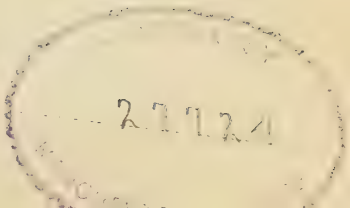
here they would be saved a purposeless walk of about a mile.

The Sistine Chapel is the private chapel of the Popes, and if admission to it were a special privilege nothing could be said against the regulations which the Vatican authorities thought fit to impose. But in effect [1] the Vatican authorities themselves treat the chapel as a gallery, admission to which is accorded thrice weekly on payment of a fee. They cannot therefore complain if they are told that no other gallery in the world would presume to inflict such pointless hardships on its patrons. But—what matters much more—the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel is the place above all others where God is glorified by the handiwork of man whom He made. Those who are privileged to be the custodians of so supreme an effort of human genius owe it as a duty to their fellow-men that fitting access is given to the awe-inspiring spectacle. At present this duty is flagrantly ignored—and as a minor incidental consequence of the neglect, distracting thoughts hamper the grasp of the architectural complexity exhibited beneath the lantern. The secret of the Vatican's plan lies open, and even the casual eye can read its system of adjoining courtyards at either end, and between them the great quadrangle, its slope once emphasized by terraced gardens and now concealed by the later galleries built across it. It was a kindly thought of Michael Angelo's to give us ordinary folk the chance of appreciating the main structural harmonies of this most elaborate Renaissance palace.

And what, meanwhile, of all Rome, seen from so many points and yet never seen at all? Is there indeed no belvedere whose comprehensive prospect

[1] I say "in effect" because the tickets are ostentatiously stamped "Gratis." But this is a piece of flummery. The tickets are given only to those who have paid for admission to the museum.

shall gather up all these sectional views, omitting nothing? Take tram to the Alban hills that from the Palatine look so near Rome, and make what choice you will among their many view-points. There, a few hundred feet below, lies the city. It sprawls flat on the plain, its hills—poor ridges after all, despite their great names—dwarfed to nothingness at this distance, and all roads leading to it in strict accordance with the proverb. But it is no longer recognizable as Rome. No distinguishing feature emerges, and even the scarcely legitimate aid of field-glasses is of no avail, since Rome is wont to hide itself beneath the veil of its own smoke and dust. But at a second glance just one detail stands out, arrests the eye, and identifies the site. Away towards the western end the confused flatness is broken by an unmistakable bulge. It is the dome. Maeterlinck was right. Rome was not herself before Michael Angelo.



II

THE CITY OF THE HILLS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE ON THE EMPERORS.

A note on the order, dates, and relationships of the more important Emperors may be helpful to readers brought up in the tradition that Roman History ended with Julius Caesar, when, from the modern European point of view, it may more properly be said to begin.

The leadership of Caesar's party passed to his young nephew who defeated his rival, Mark Antony, and became master of the world in 31 B.C., thirteen years after his uncle's murder. In recognition of his unique position, the Senate conferred on him the honorific name of AUGUSTUS, which at first meant no more than Venerable, but soon became the principal Imperial title. AUGUSTUS left no male heir, and was succeeded on his death in A.D. 14 by his adopted son—really his stepson—TIBERIUS, who reigned till A.D. 37. The succession then passed to the grandson of AUGUSTUS' daughter, a madman known to history by his nickname of CALIGULA. CALIGULA was assassinated in A.D. 41, and the Senate then turned to the other branch of the ruling house, and selected as Emperor CLAUDIUS, the son of TIBERIUS' younger brother. To strengthen his somewhat doubtful claim to the throne, CLAUDIUS married a great-great-granddaughter of AUGUSTUS, and adopted her son by a former husband as his heir. This youth was NERO, who reigned from A.D. 54 to A.D. 68, and on his death the original line of the Caesars became extinct.

There followed a year of fighting between rival military commanders. Victory finally rested with VESPASIAN, who founded a new dynasty, the FLAVIANS. From this time onward the name Caesar is taken over and becomes part of the Imperial title. VESPASIAN reigned until A.D. 79, and was survived for two years by his elder son TITUS, who had ruled with him as co-Emperor. On TITUS' death the succession passed to his younger brother, DOMITIAN, whose murder in A.D. 96 again left the Empire without a head.

The Senate dealt with the situation by electing NERVA, an elderly man of the highest integrity, with whose accession the Empire entered on its golden age. For nearly a century the Empire passed by adoption, though there was generally some slight blood relationship between its successive rulers. The names and dates of the sovereigns under whom the civilized world enjoyed a peace and prosperity which it has never known since were TRAJAN (A.D. 98), HADRIAN (A.D. 117), ANTONINUS PIUS (A.D. 138), and MARCUS AURELIUS (A.D. 161). The accession in A.D. 180 of MARCUS AURELIUS' son, COMMODUS, brought the golden age to an end, and shortly after COMMODUS' murder in A.D. 192 the throne was seized by SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS, who founded a new dynasty which endured for nearly fifty years.

In the gloomy century and a half which followed, the Empire steadily declined under a long series of unimportant Emperors whose careers were generally cut short by assassination. At last, late in the third century, civilization was saved by DIOCLETIAN, and a generation later his work was completed by CONSTANTINE (A.D. 305–337). By his recognition of Christianity CONSTANTINE set the West free to pursue its own spiritual life, and this freedom was accentuated by CONSTANTINE'S further recognition that the centre of political gravity had shifted eastward, and by his consequent transfer of the capital to the city on the Bosporus, which he re-founded and called after himself Constantinople.

CHAPTER II

ANCIENT ROME—A GENERAL SURVEY

The Zona Monumentale—Absence of trees—And of streets—Fate of the porticoes—Vergil and tradition—How it all began—Romulus—Sabines and Etruscans—Significance of the Aventine—The name Rome—The Forum—Jostling centuries—The Capitoline piazza—Its two statues—The Column of Phocas—Goethe and Major Frye—First excavations—The Colosseum—Its design and structure—The surrounding buttress—Concrete, tufa, and travertine—Mark Twain on the Colosseum—The Arch of Constantine.

EVER since Napoleonic times Roman archaeologists have been haunted by the vision of an avenue which should border a monumental zone consecrated to the city's glory. This avenue would start from the base of the Victor Emmanuel monument to which it would eventually return, so that this colossal manifestation of the art of to-day would take its place as modern Italy's tribute to her past. The first section of the avenue would include Trajan's Forum, would skirt the fora of the Emperors and, after a wide curve so as to round Nero's Golden House and the baths built upon it, would debouch on the Colosseum. The soil has been scratched at four points in the area thus indicated, and as its remaining surface is densely inhabited the present house-famine forbids any early hope of further excavation. But these mean streets and ugly tenement houses cover the site of the Imperial fora, once the most splendid series of open spaces in the world, and nowhere

else would spade and pick-axe yield such thrilling results. Some day perhaps—and the Eternal City makes no account of time.

The second section, on the other hand, is already complete. It consists of the Triumphal Way—very badly in need of repaving—between the Palatine and the Caelian and of the charming Archaeologists' Walk from the Porta Capena to the Baths of Caracalla. To form the next section the Walk should be prolonged round the farther side of the Baths and continued past the Circus, which would be cleared of the builders' sheds that now disfigure it, as far as the two temples in the Piazza della Bocca della Verita. This section might well be taken in hand at no very distant date.

The area to be included in the last section is more indefinite. On its way back to the Capitol the avenue would bound a portion of the Campus Martius which, though a favourite area for Imperial improvements, was not wholly built upon in ancient times. The theatre of Marcellus and the portico of Octavia would presumably be included, but it could hardly swing round so far as to take in the site of Pompey's theatre, and its chief function would be to facilitate the clearance of the southern peak of the Capitol with the Tarpeian Rock and the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Incidentally the road would run through the heart of mediaeval Rome. It would, however, include little post-classical work worth preserving for its own sake. Many of the characteristic rookeries of the Middle Ages have been swept away since 1870, and the clearance of most of the rest of the area would be a piece of civic betterment which will become possible when the centre of population shifts, as it will shift, up-river to the north.

The avenue is a dream. Napoleon alone could have made it, and would have made it maybe had he

ever visited Rome. As things are, its erratic line is as imaginary as the equator or as the pomoerium which, in a sense, it replaces. For this avenue is the ideal boundary of the heart of the ancient city, and there could be no more striking evidence of the majesty of ancient Rome than that the whole of the great area included in it should have been occupied by places of public resort. No modern city, not even Paris, boasts a centre of comparable magnitude, and the ruinous oblivion that descended upon it, so that to-day scanty traces are hardly recoverable 20 feet below the present level of the ground, is a measure of the series of disasters which overwhelmed civilization from the fifth century of our era onwards.

It may, indeed, be urged that the comparison made with modern cities is unfair in that the Campus Martius was a park, so that, similarly treated, the centre of London would include the far greater area between Westminster and Kensington Palace. But the objection is not fairly taken. It is true that in Augustus' day the Campus Martius included open spaces whither middle-aged Romans betook themselves to keep fit by playing fives. But even in Augustus' day the process was in train which was to cover almost all the Campus with buildings. Pompey had begun it with his theatre, which was no mere theatre but a scheme of buildings including a Senate House. Augustus himself continued it with the theatre of Marcellus and an enlargement of the portico which he called after his sister, Octavia. Agrippa seconded him with his temple and his baths. There was a fresh spell of building under the Flavians when Domitian added a circus and an opera house. By the end of the first century there was little free land left, and Hadrian soon covered most of it.

But, further, the Campus Martius was no park in

our sense of the term, because it contained no trees. We hear, indeed, of laurel bushes planted in honour of Augustus, but the Roman mind did not conceive of trees as part of the urban landscape. They were planted in the gardens, most of them accessible to the public, which were laid out on the outer hills, the Pincian and the Janiculum ; and it was from a friend who had climbed a tree on the Pincian that the Empress Messalina first received warning of her approaching doom. But trees in the city were a rarity.[1] A fig-tree in the Forum was treasured for centuries as a curiosity, and the memory of the groves which once occupied the central depression of the Capitol and a portion of the Palatine near the Vestals' House was cherished long after the trees themselves had been cut down. But such survivals were exceptional. According to Roman ideas the town was the town, and it was monstrous to attempt to turn it into the country. Perhaps a trace of this feeling still colours the Latin mind ; at any rate, when Pierre Loti was at last induced to visit London, nothing surprised and delighted him so much as the sight of sheep in the Green Park. Even now continental cities are lacking in gardens, and the only garden known to have existed in ancient Rome is Domitian's " Stadium " on the Palatine. It is characteristic that the northerner, Theodoric, made this open space the heart of his palace. But among the ancients the only man with modern ideas as to parks and gardens was the Emperor Nero. That unappreciated genius proposed to lay out the surroundings of the Palatine in worthy fashion. There was to be a real garden, not a few scraps of formal bedding and

[1] In Imperial Rome a tree was rare enough to be a landmark. In the Atrio Quadrato of the Vatican is the tombstone of one Diadumenos whose address was " ad pinum," by the pine tree. On the front of the stone is carved the Polycleitean figure from which Diadumenos took his name, and on the side is the pine-tree, excellently rendered.

topiary work such as his contemporaries understood by the name, but great grassy spaces set off by patches of forest and thickets for animal sanctuaries and a lake. The Roman mind was profoundly shocked; an epigrammatist suggested that the population had better migrate to Veii; and the prudent Vespasian, who understood public opinion, drained Nero's lake and built the Colosseum on its site. It is all very strange to us; but if a Roman of the first century could be brought to modern London he would be aghast at the space occupied by the gardens of Buckingham Palace, and when shown the wonderful view from the bridge across the Serpentine, with the Abbey towers showing dimly in the distance over the trees, he would conclude that England was ruled by a race of tyrants out-heroding the worst of the Caesars.

Besides its lack of gardens, there was another feature of Rome which reflected its inhabitants' conception of a town as an aggregate of houses. It had no streets in the sense in which a modern capital understands the word. The visitor to the Forum finds the Sacred Way just broad enough for his needs, and is moved to wonder how long it must have taken to walk from the Temple of Castor to the Colosseum on a day of festival when all Rome was abroad. The visitor to the Palatine, as he walks up the gloomy stretch of hill almost overwhelmed by the buildings carried over it on arches, can scarcely believe that this was one of the main approaches to the palace of the masters of the world.

There was not a decently broad street in all Rome, and the narrow alley-ways quite failed to offer adequate passage to a population which spent much of its time out of doors. Under the Empire all private vehicular traffic was forbidden, but even this drastic step failed to relieve the congestion at the centre. The great Julius

revealed to his successors the only way of dealing with the problem. The deficiencies of the streets must be made good by the multiplication of open spaces. Buying up the land at enormous expense, he laid out a new Forum to the north of the old so as to facilitate movement to the Campus, whither he proposed to transfer the electoral assemblies. His policy was further developed by the early Emperors, until at last Trajan, working possibly on Domitian's lines, opened out a levelled space between the Capitol and the Quirinal. But from first to last, and in spite of an attempt by Nero to improve matters after the fire, Rome had no streets. Mediaeval cities were built in its image ; the street, as we understand it—such a street as the Thames Embankment—is a modern invention. The stage-coach demanded room, and when fortifications of the Vauban type were levelled, urban architects seized their opportunity and made boulevards.

In ancient Rome the absence of streets had a good deal to do with the absence of trees. There was no room for them. What the loungers of the capital desired and what the Emperors gave them were the centrally situated open spaces in which they could sun themselves during the cool weather or while away the time under awnings in the heat of summer. The atmosphere must have been somewhat dry and hard, and may in part account for the elaborate ritual of the daily bath. But it must be borne in mind that there was no vehicular traffic to stir up dust, and that fountains played everywhere. No city in the world has ever had such a water supply as Imperial Rome ; it has been calculated that its aqueducts daily delivered more water than flowed through the bed of the Tiber. Supplies were laid on to private houses, but there were public jets at almost every corner, as well as an immense number of fountains, it being the policy

of the authorities to aerate the water thoroughly before it entered the distributing pipes.

The Campus Martius, then, was the lung of a treeless and streetless city. It accepted the former deficiency, but sought to remedy the latter. This is the explanation of the porticoes, which ran across the length and breadth of the Campus. These porticoes were long colonnades, often ornamented with statuary, which afforded shade and shelter on ground where no trees gave protection against sun or rain. They offered opportunity too for the walking exercise which it was impossible to obtain in Rome.[1] Horace, indeed, was content to take his constitutional along the Sacred Way, but those who wished to stretch their legs more thoroughly found that the porticoes of the Campus precisely met their need. Unhappily these porticoes were relatively movable, and Christianity rearranged them to suit its needs, making one of them, for instance, run from the walls to the Basilica of S. Paolo. But material once moved could be moved again, and the porticoes, ancient and mediaeval alike, have completely vanished. There is, indeed, one street whose name at first suggests a reminiscence of a portico in the last stage of decadence. The Via delle Botteghe Oscure runs across the heart of the Campus. In its present aspect it contains nothing to justify its name. What were the shops whose darkness was so profound that even mediaeval Romans noticed it? A glance at the theatre of Marcellus supplies the answer Its arches are occupied to this day by gloomy little work-holes—" botteghe oscure " indeed. Similar places must once have given its name to our street, and as it is long and straight, with no hint of the curve of an ancient

[1] Here again Nero showed the revolutionary workings of his mind. The dimensions of the portico he planned for his Golden House became legendary.

building, it is tempting to claim a portico for its ancestor. But the archaeologist will have it otherwise. Lanciani's "Forma Urbis" shows the street as running along the side of the Flaminian Circus. In ancient times the space under the arches supporting the back rows of seats may have been used as store rooms like the arches of railway bridges nowadays; and as mediaeval Rome gradually came to occupy the Campus, these convenient spaces were filled by "dark shops." In time dwellings were built on top of them, and it may be that vestiges of the old marble are still buried beneath the ground.

It would be a felicitous historical accident if a few stumps were one day revealed by the spade, for the portico has its place among the architectural devices which the Roman Empire bequeathed to later times. In Rome itself it was an importation, and never managed to assert its place in the inhabited area. But it was an essential part of Hellenistic cities farther east where the sun shone with more than Italian fervour, and Antioch in particular was famous for the series of covered avenues at its heart. The Romans thus knew well enough what to do where space permitted, and introduced the Hellenistic method into the lay-out of such places as Bologna and Padua and Turin, in all of which it persists to this day. When the French descended on Lombardy they noted the idea, took it home with them, and in due course applied it on a large scale in the Rue de Rivoli. From Paris it passed to London, a French architect having worked it into his design for the Ritz Hotel, so that the little strip of Piccadilly under its arches has a history which reaches back through the Rome of the Caesars to the successors of Alexander the Great.

So much for the features of the heart of Rome as outlined by our archaeological avenue. Besides its exclusively public character, it possessed another

striking peculiarity. Almost every yard of it was stamped by tradition. The centre of Imperial magnificence coincides almost exactly with the area seen by Aeneas in the visit which Vergil makes him pay in the eighth book of the *Aeneid*. The hero landed near the point where our avenue touches the river, and the various valleys through which it takes its course lay beneath his eyes as he walked and talked with his host Evander on the Palatine. The contrast which Vergil is perpetually suggesting with wonderful subtle touches between the log cabins which Aeneas saw and the Rome of marble which Augustus was bringing into existence, must have stirred the hearts of the poet's contemporaries. Its effect is yet more profound on us who see but the wreckage of so much splendour. But Vergil is not merely making a neat literary point. He goes deep. He thrusts to the roots of Roman consciousness and—because he was even greater than his great theme—penetrates beyond them to the common emotions of humanity. In this book he is at once most Roman and most human, and through him the student of the twentieth century and the Roman of the first can meet on the common ground of an absorbing interest in how Rome grew. For throughout this section of his poem Vergil is constantly reminding his readers of their tremendous civic patriotism whose fire made Rome mistress of the world; and it was thanks in no small measure to his stimulus that Romans began to find it indecent that the most hallowed spots in the city they worshipped should become the private residences of millionaires.

This was an important aspect of that historical revival which Augustus, Vergil helping him, did so much to promote; but even in the latest Republican period *nouveaux riches* who bought houses on the Palatine exposed themselves to jeers. It would be interest-

ing to know the remarks passed by Clodius on Cicero in this connection; and time has preserved to us the nickname of "Palatine Venus," given to the first millionaire who set up marble columns in his house. Emperors like Augustus, Vespasian, and Trajan, who were in sympathy with the average opinion of their time, knew that nothing could win them more popularity than the conversion of this central area to public purposes; and this accounts for its aspect in Imperial times. A Roman wandering freely all over it with recollections of his school-days in mind—the patriotic stories of Livy, the patriotic poem of Vergil—was naturally tempted to ask himself how it all began; and no question gave such fascinating scope to the historical school of the nineteenth century.

We do not know—probably we shall never know—how it all began, but at least we are better informed than the contemporaries of Augustus; and we could actually instruct the contemporaries of Romulus in the meaning and origin of certain of their customs. The founder of Rome would doubtless learn with some surprise that if he existed at all—a point as to which there is now some tendency to give him the benefit of the doubt—he sprang of a race which had migrated from the Danube Valley into Italy during the later Neolithic Age, and had subsequently learnt the use of iron from a later invasion whose pressure had driven the earlier settlers across the Apennines. This is the outline of the story whose details may be filled in by a visit to the prehistoric museum up three flights of stairs above the Victor Emmanuel Library. The first of its rooms contains the chipped unpolished flints characteristic of palaeolithic man. This civilization—if the word be admissible—existed in Italy and even in Latium, but had a shorter life, or at any rate a less complete development, than in France.

It was overwhelmed or absorbed by a neolithic invasion of a race definitely Italic. These people lived in villages composed of circular huts, whose foundations have been exposed in many parts of Italy. The form of their dwellings is preserved in the hut-urns in which the early Latins placed the ashes of their dead. But the hut-urns themselves are not the work of the neolithic Italic stock whose practice was to bury, not to cremate, their dead. The museum contains (Room 32) a neolithic grave found in the Sabine hills. It will be observed that, besides flints, a copper dagger was buried with the dead man. He thus belongs to the period of transition between the Stone and the Bronze Ages. (Its technical name—Chalcolithic—is a mere mouthful nowadays, but dates from that other prehistoric period when a veneer of Greek was held to make science respectable.) In this part of the museum (Room 30) are implements from similar graves in the Latin plain itself. By a happy contrast they are placed opposite the remains of a tribe in North-Eastern Italy whose culture remained neolithic until the end of the Republic.[1]

Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin. It combines the qualities of both its elements, and its use is an immense step forward in civilization. The men of the Bronze Age entered Italy through both the eastern and the western passes of the Alps, and brought with them the germ of that intense civic sense which was to the end the basis of the Roman conception of society. They lived in villages of a highly organized type. The men of the western invasion built themselves lake dwellings well suited to the physical character of the

[1] In the later rooms are examples of the more advanced culture which show that these invading stocks were not without the keen practical eye so characteristic of their Latin descendants. Note especially the use of little boats as a vivid decorative motive (Room 41, Cases 25–6).

Po Valley. Piles were driven into the water or the marsh, and houses set atop of them. But the men of the eastern invasion carried this practice a stage farther. They retained the piles but dispensed with the water except for a moat. They threw their rubbish into the space beneath their huts, and when it was filled up drove in fresh piles and started over again. Such were the insanitary beginnings of the stock which conquered the world.

The site of the village was chosen near running water, which was tapped to make the moat. A trench was dug and the earth thrown up on the farther side to make a rampart—the *agger* of the Latins. Inside the trench was the platform of the village resting on piles. At the point nearest the water channel the platform was cut away to an acute angle so that the water could easily flow all round ; and one wooden bridge maintained communication with the outside world. The village was broken up into blocks by streets running at right angles to one another, and numbered off from the central divisions according to the modern American plan. One block, however, was itself surrounded by a moat and approached by a bridge—a village in miniature within the main village. The whole arrangement is so precisely parallel to that of a Roman camp as to put the line of historical descent beyond all doubt. Five rooms of the museum (Nos. 31–5) are filled with the remains of this civilization, and by way of showing that it is as yet undifferentiated from a whole phase of human development the authorities have illustrated it by a photograph of a modern lake village in New Guinea. In Italy its remains extend southwards from the Po Valley, but it showed no disposition to cross the Apennines.

The impulse was given by a fresh migration from

the Danube Valley. The new-comers appear to have been akin in race to the previous invaders, and it is perhaps for this reason that the older stock speedily learnt from them the new device of smelting iron. With this new technique they were emboldened to cross the mountains, and the Alban hills became filled with their settlements. Time went on; manners grew less wild; the primitive Latins showed increasing familiarity with the use of the plough, and even availed themselves of it to trace the outline of their moats. Hill summits became unsuitable as dwellings for a comparatively tamed people. They cast longing eyes on the grazing grounds below. The ridges in the centre of the plain possessed obvious attractions, and offshoots from the Alban hills established themselves upon them, and particularly on the Esquiline. One day, when increase of population and pressure from without had made further settlement essential, a tribal chief, more observant or more lazy than his fellows, was struck by the conveniences of the Palatine. As it was already surrounded by water on three sides, the indispensable moat was almost made in advance. The chief led his followers across the Velia and changed the history of the world.

Whether his name was actually Romulus is open to question. Fifty years ago it was fashionable to resolve all traditions into solar myths. But the discoveries in Crete have served as an awful warning against critical explanations which end by explaining things away. So far from being a sun-god, King Minos is known to have lived in Crete in a palace sufficiently complicated to be called a labyrinth; and it only remains for the diggers to unearth the skeleton of the Minotaur. Romulus may be in similar case. But for the war a learned German might by now have

proved that the name was a primitive form of Wilhelm.[1] As it is, we must be content to note that, like all primitive communities, the settlers on the Palatine must have had a chief, and that the first tradition which a settlement cherishes is the name of its founder.

Fortunately for the future of mankind, the Latins were not alone in discerning the advantages of the ridges which subsequently became the hills of Rome. Two hills—the Quirinal and the Viminal—were in the occupation of the Sabines. So says tradition, and its record is supported by language. These two hills were known in Latin as *colles* (our *hills*), whereas the others were styled *montes* (our *mountains*). It would be tempting to argue that the Sabine settlers belonged to the primitive neolithic stock whose presence in Latium is proved by graves; but the evidence, such as it is, suggests that they were in about the same stage of civilization as their Latin rivals. Both lagged behind the third element in the early Roman community.

Now that Crete has yielded up its secrets, the Etruscans are the great unsolved mystery of archaeology. Their origin is obscure, but Herodotus probably records an authentic memory when he says that they came from the East; at any rate, their language is not Indo-European. They appear to have landed on the west coast of Italy in the eighth century B.C., a period of great confusion in the Mediterranean world which also witnessed the Dorian invasion of Greece. Like the Romans, they did not hesitate to borrow ideas from their neighbours, and especially from the Greeks

[1] L and M are both liquids and easily interchangeable; and plenty of people pronounce their R's as W's. So Romulus, Rolumus, Wolumus, and thence by weakening of the vowels and attrition of the suffix, Wilhelm. Besides, learned Germans have done worse things (*vide* H. S. Chamberlain, *Grundgedanken des 19sten Jahrhunderts, passim*).

to the south; but they also possessed, and handed over to the Romans along with much else, certain vigorous and most realistic art notions of their own.

Orthodox Roman tradition persisted in treating the Etruscans as foreigners. It acknowledged, however, the Etruscan affinities of the last of the Roman kings, and modern historians have not hesitated to conclude that the city passed into the hands of powerful Etruscan lords. Be this as it may, there is another tradition which would admit the Etruscan element at an earlier date. Tacitus reports the existence of an ancient Etruscan settlement on the Caelian, and the Emperor Claudius, a respectable antiquarian, treats the tradition as historic, and actually cites it—in a speech which has come down to us—as a precedent for admitting Gauls into the Senate.[1] It is confirmed by the remains in the necropolis which Comm. Boni has laid bare in the Forum. Burial in the Forum must have ceased when the site was drained and incorporated in the city, so that the necropolis is prehistoric. It contained two types of grave—ashes in urns and skeletons in hollowed tree-trunks. Now the Latins burned and the Etruscans buried their dead, so that the necropolis appears to have been a joint cemetery. Moreover, the coffins are later than some of the urns, as is proved by the fact that an urn has been broken in making room for a tree-trunk. There is thus evidence that the Etruscans were not the first comers, but their success in establishing themselves in Rome along with Latin and Sabine elements is shown by certain Roman names and by the practice of burial—proved by the discovery of the tombs of the Scipios—on the part of the great patrician house of the Cornelii. For evi-

[1] The Gauls regarded the speech as their charter; and it is natural that its text, engraved on bronze, should have been found at Lyons, the capital of Roman Gaul.

dence of early commercial intercourse with the Etruscan communities across the Tiber it is unnecessary to look beyond the name, Vicus Tuscus, Tuscan Street, of the road leading from the Forum to the river.

Thus far tradition and archaeology journey hand in hand. Tradition alone now takes a few more falter-steps into the past. Nothing is known of the men who flocked to the asylum which Romulus opened for all the *budmashes* of the neighbourhood in the central depression of the Capitol which is now the seat of the Roman municipality. Yet, in view of the story, it would be rash to see, with Mommsen, no more in the asylum than the citadel of the amalgamated Latins and Sabines. Nothing is known of the men whom Romulus led ; unless, however, the tradition be utterly falsified they were not a migratory tribe seeking a home, but a group of adventurers who had brought neither wives nor children with them, and therefore looked for their women to the other communities into which they had thrust themselves. Farther back than this the tradition can hardly be said to run. Yet, as it stands, it is conspicuously incomplete. It makes no mention of the Aventine, the hill which above all others commands the trade route along and across the Tiber. The economic theory of origins is less fashionable than it used to be, and it seems clear that Rome at any rate was not founded for purposes of trade. Below the Aventine is another hill which comes so close to the river that the space between now just leaves room for the Basilica of S. Paolo and the road to Ostia. A people set on controlling the river traffic would undoubtedly have seized it. But it has no history, not even a name. It lies on the very edge of an immortality in which it has no part.

Trade of some sort, however, there must have been. The men of the later Neolithic Age had obsidian and

amber—neither of them local products. The latter, indeed, must have come from the Baltic. But the strongest evidence of early trade is the bridge, the famous *pons sublicius*, which right through historic times was built of wood and clamped together with bronze. The legend of Horatius explains why this method of building was retained after the Iron Age had dawned; it facilitated the swift destruction of the bridge when the Etruscans across the river started on the war-path. But what the legend does not explain is the religious significance of the bridge. The chief bridge-builder, *pontifex maximus*, was a sort of medicine man. His religious functions differed from those of the king, and belong to a far older society.[1] It was his duty to propitiate the river-god—whose passionate nature was shown by his frequent floods—by a process of sympathetic magic. He threw into the water mannikins made of reeds gathered by the river's own banks. Moreover, he was the official father of the maidens who guarded and maintained the community's first necessity—its fire—in a round hut. The shape suggests the neolithic period; the bridge itself belongs to the age of bronze; later yet the Aventine became a trading outpost of the early Iron Age settlements in the Alban hills.[2] Hence it was that the Temple of Diana on the Aventine was no Roman shrine, but a common sanctuary of the Latin league; hence, too, the exclusion

[1] Because of its extreme antiquity the title was assumed by the Emperors, always anxious to give a sound conservative tone to their anomalous position. From them it passed to their successors, the Popes. A good deal of European history is summed up in the successive meanings of the word "pontiff."

[2] The ground below the hill had associations with Hercules, whom harmonizing legend brought as a visitor to the Palatine. But the name is not very helpful. For all his Eastern connections, he may orginally have come from the North. In his constant battles against material obstacles and the terrors of the unknown he seems almost the ideal of primitive man straining after civilization. He was always a wanderer, a point worth noting in view of the economic importance of this quarter of Rome.

of the hill from the official circuit of Rome until early Imperial times.

But if its antiquity is thus manifest, why no mention of it in legend? The guess may be risked that the settlers on the Palatine were no friends of the older communities on the Alban hills. It would seem that they were driven out—as is indicated by the legend of the exposure of the twins—and hence came without women. As enemies they established themselves on the Palatine and as enemies attacked the trade post on the Aventine. Of this battle some hint may survive in the story of the death of Remus. In any event, relations with the older settlement were soon re-established; the Latins of the hills could not do without access to the river.

One thing at least which is worth having comes from insistence on the early importance of the Aventine It enables a decent origin to be given to the name Rome. The Romans themselves, whose philology was laughable, were satisfied with the appearance of the word in Greek dress (*Ῥώμη*). Well was their city named "strength." But this attractive coincidence is dismissed by modern scholarship. Some would connect the name with the root of such words as ruminate; others make it the brushwood city (later Latin *ramus*, a branch, our *ramifications*). But the derivation which still finds most favour is from a root signifying running water (Greek *ῥεομένον*). If this be right, it were unfitting that Rome should take its name from the forgotten streams which once flowed through the valleys about the Palatine. Happily the Aventine, the pile bridge, the *pontifex maximus*, suffice to make Rome the child of Father Tiber himself.

All this is far behind Romulus, but even here tradition is not quite silent. Dim tales there were—the elements with which Vergil has wrought his magic. In the far-

off beginnings where legend makes no pretence to be history, Evander on the Palatine could tell his guest of other settlements on the Capitol and the Janiculum. To us, as to Dante, mysteries are revealed with Vergil for guide and master. Led by him we dimly discern the Rome that was when there were as yet no Romans and fitly carry back the origins of the Eternal City until it becomes almost coeval with time itself.

Aventine and Palatine, Capitol, Quirinal, Caelian —the Forum is the heart of them all. No other piece of ground in Europe is so full of meaning to all civilized men, and, like other celebrated sights, it creates a first impression of disappointment. This grass-grown heap of ruins—so small too—can this really be the world's central piazza ? And indeed the Forum requires to be viewed with an eye of faith and appreciated by a sympathetic mind. Yet, considering how little there is left, it is rather matter for marvel that even the first disappointing impression should be unmistakably tinged with awe. This awe springs first and foremost from the sheer beauty of the Forum in decay. There is nothing morbid about the phrase. Now and again in his own country an Englishman sees a ruined house. Its bricks are seared and putrid ; its wretched framework, its poor internal order, the fragments of stained paper still adhering to its walls, make up a spectacle of utter hideousness. Decay in Italy is free from such abomination. The whole peninsula is full of ancient buildings slowly mouldering away, passing mellowly and imperceptibly into dust as though in alliance with time. Their splendid detail, the pride of craftsmanship, has perished, their purposeful strength, the very emblem of their builders, majestically endures. Here roofs have crashed, marbles have been flung into the kiln, cornices and columns lie in fragmentary ruin, the buildings have been stripped of their very stones until only the

core remains, and yet—this is the Roman Forum still. When a golden light slants peacefully down upon it in the later afternoon, caressing the three exquisite columns of the Temple of Castor and glancing off the greenery that marks and covers the terraced palaces of the Imperial hill, paradox triumphs, the glory of this world becomes immortal and does not pass.

It all looks very old, and on days of grim drizzle, such as even Rome knows sometimes, becomes indecent, ghoulish, an architectural skeleton with the flesh of putrescent ornament still clinging scrappily about its fragmentary bones. On hot days of spring sunshine, too, it grows pathetic—a strange unbecoming fate for anything Roman—and the eye is shocked by the poppies flaunting their impudent crimson among its stones. But at all seasons the sloping beams of the afternoon sun take it out of time, and above all throughout the strong summer heat it broods timelessly. Buried for centuries beneath accumulated rubbish, it is still ghostlike after its long sojourn outside human ken, and the boots of generations of sightseers will beat on its stones before it recovers full touch with humanity and becomes soothingly mellow as an ancient cathedral is mellow. As yet mellowness is upon the Palatine but not upon the Forum.

Yet even here, where everything seems at first to belong to the same utterly vanished past, the centuries jostle. They jostle in the general view from the Velia, with Constantine's Basilica a stone's throw from Titus' Arch—Palestine associated with both names, but how diversely! The eye roams on, picking out the main features; the Temple of Romulus, built to commemorate the dream of a new dynasty which should revive the ancient glories of Rome, already doomed, though the father of Romulus knew it not, to an extinction more complete than the death of his heir could threaten;

the Arch of Septimius Severus, one more monument of Rome's Eastern adventures which were to lead to so strange an issue; the Republican tabularium with all the medley of structures that time has added to it; and in the background the gleaming freshness of Victor Emmanuel's monument. Even in details there is the same blend of distant epochs. In front of the Basilica Aemilia are large fragments of an inscription with the name of one of the lads to whom Augustus would have bequeathed the Empire if fate, as he puts it in his own epitaph, had not taken them from him; then, in succession, marble fragments of the basilica as restored by Tiberius, the meagre columns of a late reconstruction, the ruins of a mediaeval church or palace, itself put together out of ruins, and behind it all, pressing close as though grudging archaeology its discoveries, the unprepossessing buildings of modern Rome. Even here, then, despite the thousand lapsed years, Rome is true to herself. Even the Forum is under the spell of her irony that takes its quiet revenge on time.

It may well be that a subconscious hint of this victory over time contributes to the sense of awe with which the spectacle of the Forum overwhelms the momentary shock of disappointment; but credit must also be given to the magnificent preparation for the effect. No panorama in the world has such an approach—a creation of genius made possible by the course of Rome's development. When the temples were closed and the palaces abandoned, the people of Rome moved down into the Campus, drawn towards St. Peter's. There they huddled in picturesque romantic discomfort for close on a thousand years, so that when at last civic consciousness revived and Romans remembered their Capitol they naturally approached it from behind. It is this fact that the back door of the old Rome has

become the front door of the new that enables the Forum to boast of an access of such distinction. The fact is not apparent nowadays, because the centre of Rome has shifted northward, so that the modern visitor makes his way to the Capitol from the Piazza Venezia and not from the Piazza Ara Coeli. In itself the great square provides a vestibule of adequate stateliness, but for the time being its link with the Capitol is a narrow and unsavoury passage. Happily the completion of the Victor Emmanuel monument will involve the removal of the dirty old houses which disfigure one side of the way.

The ascent to the Capitol is by the *Cordonata,* a series of very broad, very thin steps. At the top stand two gigantic figures—noble specimens of the colossal art to which the later Empire was addicted. They are flanked, right and left, along the balustrade of the piazza, by monumental statues of the first two Christian Emperors, by trophies which were probably set up by Domitian, and by milestones from the Appian Way. To the right of the *Cordonata* winds a carriage road whose construction in recent times revealed fragments of the so-called Servian wall. To the left is a garden whose trees and flowers contrast happily with the flat brown façade of the church above. The ornamentation of the garden is not wholly successful. First, indeed, comes a granite slab which is entirely in place. It bears engraved upon it the closing lines of what is perhaps the finest achievement of *risorgimento* poetry, Carducci's birthday ode to Rome. Beyond the slab is a somewhat finicking bronze statue of Rienzi. So far, however, so good. But there follow two pieces of grotesque symbolism, first a large cage containing three squalid eagles, and next a smaller cage with a she-wolf, unprovided with twins. Looking ahead for the inevitable goose-pen, the eye lights on

the hall in which the city fathers hold their meetings, and it is just as well that the appearance of this hall puts a check on ribald thoughts. A double staircase of travertine fills the lower part of the façade. Above it is the main front of the building, broken by pilasters which rise to the cornice, and all this front is mellowed to a wonderful warm brown. On either side are travertine buildings set at an angle. They are two-storied, and their fronts, too, are bordered by pilasters rising to the full height of the balustrade above. The lower story is arcaded, and columns are set in pairs in each bay of the arcade and on either side of the upper windows.

The way in which columns and pilasters are here combined is most noteworthy. An ordinary man instructed to work them into an architectural design would use the column, as the stronger and more dignified instrument, for his main structural prop, and would treat his pilasters decoratively. Here this treatment is reversed, and it is precisely this reversal which makes the design a success. For the piazza is narrow, and the problem before the architect was to construct dignified buildings in a limited space. Columns would not avail him, for columns would have emphasized the paltry dimensions of the site and made the work crowded and cramped. But pilasters, used freely and largely, exactly served his need. By carrying them up in unbroken lines from ground to basement, he obtained the necessary dignity, and the accessory columns reinforce them with an air of strength. It is hardly necessary to add that the man of genius who conceived this simple bold and triumphant solution of his problem was Michael Angelo.

To complete the effect, the piazza required some distinct but not over-assertive central point to draw the eye. Michael Angelo availed himself of a statue

of Marcus Aurelius. Originally erected near the Lateran, the statue had been set up in front of the church under the mistaken belief that it represented Constantine—perhaps the crowning instance of making the punishment fit the crime. There it witnessed strange scenes in its day. Blood was spilt in front of it, and once an unhappy mediaeval person was suspended from it by his hair for a day and a night. It is not an attractive piece of work. According to modern ideas the horse is too clumsily built for riding, and the Emperor wears his usual insipid expression of self-conscious virtue. But it achieves a fine decorative effect which exactly suits its present purpose. "The height of the pedestal, which is said to have been designed by Michael Angelo, is skilfully calculated so as to permit spectators to inspect even the head of the statue." Thus Baedeker with charming *naïveté*.

There is another statue in the piazza which merits a word. Behind the fountain which fills the space in front of the staircase is a niche which Michael Angelo originally proposed to fill with a Jupiter from his own chisel. The work was never completed, and there was set up in its place the great statue of Athene which now stands in the entrance corridor of the Capitoline Museum. But it was felt to be unfitting that the Capitol of Rome should be dominated by the virgin goddess of the Acropolis, and a discovery at Cori seemed to offer a good alternative. There was found a majestic figure holding a globe—clearly the symbol of the mistress of the world. So the figure, which is much too small for its place, was raised on a pile of armour and set up. But in matters of art Rome cannot exclude Greece; and this statue, too, is an Athene.

Meanwhile, what of the Forum to which all this magnificence was said to be the approach? The Forum is invisible, hidden from view by the Palazzo

del Senatore, but it is very close. A descent of a few yards to the left leads to the Arch of Septimius Severus. Thence the modern road crosses the Forum's western end, and from a balcony half-way up the parallel ascent on the other side there is afforded an admirable general view. (An even better view-point presents itself a few yards higher up, where, however, the philistine authorities have installed a public convenience.) Our balcony is the truncated end of a carriage road which once led to the Colosseum, and its height is a measure of the rise in the level of the ground. It juts out a good two-thirds of the way up the slope of the old Capitoline Hill, up which many a provincial must have climbed during the first four centuries of our era for the sake of the spectacle spread out beneath. But after the beginning of the seventh century the Forum fell into neglect. It is generally stated that the Column of Phocas was the last monument to be set up in ancient times. Phocas was a bloodthirsty tyrant whose "piety and gentleness" were invoked by Gregory the Great in the hope that he would extend a protecting arm after the pattern of Justinian two generations earlier. If, then, the erection of the column is contemporary with its inscription, the continuous history of the Forum would close just about the time that the continuous history of Britain begins. But it is probable that the monument was already in position, and was simply crowned with a new statue and an inscription to match.

In any case, the column was not set up till late in the classical period, and was certainly taken from some existing building. Now one of the columns of the so-called Temple of Vesta by the river has been removed from its place, and the conclusion at once suggests itself that it was transported here. Precise measurement and an investigation of the marble would

promptly settle the point, but the necessary information is not to be obtained from any of the usual books of reference. (The "Temple of Vesta" is built either of Parian or of Pentelic marble—the authorities differ.) But, whatever the date at which the development of the Forum ceases, its final destruction was due to the very race responsible for the final construction of England. When Robert Guiscard sacked Rome in 1084 he did immense damage in this area, and after his departure Roman nobles built their towers on the ruins. With the reassertion of papal power and the demolition of the aristocrats' strongholds, the Forum became a grazing ground. So it remained, with a few columns showing above the surface, until 1536, when Charles V paid his visit of reconciliation nine years after the sack of Rome by his troops. The Pope of the day resolved that the Emperor should pass under the three triumphal arches of Septimius Severus, Titus, and Constantine, and so levelled a road from the Capitol to the Velia. Along this road was planted the avenue of trees which was only cut down within living memory.

Save for the pestilential search for marble for the limekilns, no interest was taken in the buried ruins. All true topographical tradition perished. The Forum was believed to lie in the Velabrum, while the avenue was held to indicate the line of the Sacred Way. Falling into this error when he visited Rome, the meandering sentimentalist, Goethe, was moved to indulge in what he took to be appropriate reflections. Goethe was in Rome in 1786. When Major Frye visited Rome thirty years later, the critical, realistic temperament had begun to assert itself. Major Frye was one of the many Englishmen who crossed the Channel to make a grand tour of the Continent as soon as the close of the Napoleonic war made Europe accessible to English travellers. He was a remarkable man whose

qualities account for his failure to attain a military rank worthy of his capacity. He was an excellent linguist, and had somehow kept up his French and Italian during his many years' service in the East. He was destitute of insular prejudice and full of sympathetic admiration for the Napoleonic régime. His critical knowledge of art was primitive, but he travelled with his eyes open and his book, published after the manuscript had lain in a cupboard for almost a century, is capital reading and most instructive alike in its facts and in its limitations.

Major Frye arrived in Rome in September 1816, and put up in the Via Condotti at an hotel kept by a German. There were many German visitors for the Englishman to study, " among them I distinguished one day a very intelligent Bavarian Jew. I proposed to him a walk to the Coliseum the following morning as, independent of the benefit I derived from his conversation, I was curious to see whether it was true or not that the Jews always avoided walking under the Arch of Titus, which was erected in commemoration of the capture of Jerusalem. . . ." The pair went by a roundabout route, first visiting the Church of S. Maria Maggiore and thence making their way to the Colosseum, where the Jew took careful measurements of its dimensions while the Major meditated. " The Christian writers," he observes, " mention that many of this sect suffered martyrdom here by being compelled to fight with wild beasts ; but even this was not so bad as the conduct of the Christians when they obtained possession of political power and dominion, in burning alive poor Jews, Moors, and heretics some centuries afterwards. Indeed, the cruelty of the pagans was much exaggerated by the above writers, and were it even true to its full extent their severity was far more excusable than that of the Christians in later times, for the efforts of the

Christian sects in the times of paganism were necessarily directed towards the destruction of the whole fabric of polytheism on which was based the entire social and political order of the Empire, and they thus brought on themselves perhaps merited persecution by their own intolerance; whereas when they got the upper hand they showed no mercy to those of a different religion, and orthodoxy has wallowed successively in the blood of Arians, Jews, Moors, and Protestants." [1]

The travellers next examined the Arch of Constantine, and then turned to the Arch of Titus, "under which we moved along on our road towards the Capitol, and my friend the Jew was too much of a cosmopolitan to feel the smallest repugnance at walking under the Arch. . . . Our conversation then turned on the absurd hatred and prejudice that existed between Christians and Jews; he was very liberal on this subject, and in speaking of Jesus Christ he said, 'Jesus Christ was a Jew and a real philosopher, and was therefore persecuted, for his philosophy interfered too much with and tended to shake the political fabric of the Jewish constitution and to subvert our old customs and usages; for this reason he was put to death. I do not seek to defend or palliate the injustice of the act or the barbarity with which he was treated; but our nation did surely no more than any other nation, ancient or modern, has done or would still do against reformers and innovators.'" [2] Thus, a hundred years ago, could men reflect and argue within a few months of the conclusion of a devastating war.

Systematic excavation had just begun when Major Frye walked in Rome with his Jewish friend. Here and there a monument had been dug out and stood in a pit, partly hidden by the surrounding soil. It was so with the Arch of Constantine, and also with the

[1] Frye, *After Waterloo*, p. 215. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 216–17.

Column of Phocas which, characteristically enough, was one of the first survivals of antiquity to be laid completely bare, doubtless in the hope that it would prove a fragment of some magnificent temple. According to Lanciani, whom Baedeker follows, the base was excavated about 1811 at the expense of the Duchess of Devonshire. But as the war was still raging, and Rome was at this time French territory, the credit for this piece of archaeology would seem to belong rather to Count Tournon, the Napoleonic Governor of Rome. Major Frye, who knew the Column of Phocas for what it was, states that work financed by the Duchess was in progress at the time of his visit. It is pleasant to find an English peeress[1] associated with a great enterprise carried on at intervals throughout the nineteenth century by the three Governments which Rome had known during that period—the French, the Papal, and the Italian.

Throughout all these vicissitudes the Forum site has been closed at either end by two notable buildings, the one Republican, the other Imperial, the one a department of State, the other a centre of amusement. The Tabularium and the Colosseum are both thoroughly characteristic of Rome alike in purpose and in structure. They are first-class pieces of engineering, showing the engineers' consideration for strength at points of strain. The Tabularium, which on the whole has been more kindly treated by time, is mainly built of peperino, but its inner walls are of tufa and its arches of travertine. The structure of the Colosseum is even more complex, and is well revealed by the collapse, at some uncertain date in the fourteenth century, of half of its surrounding shell. This same collapse has achieved a fine historic effect. Above the broken wall rise the statues which crown the Lateran, and in front, dwarfing even the

[1] She was the second wife of the fifth Duke.

loftiness of the unbroken façade, towers a campanile. It takes the place and rivals the height of the statue of the sun-god with his own features which Nero caused to be set up and which Hadrian had moved by six elephants to the space in front of the Colosseum, where its foundation endures yet, to make room for his temple of Rome which has become the Church of S. Francesca Romana. It is the whole later history of Rome in summary.

In both design and structure the Colosseum is of surpassing interest among Roman buildings. The most direct modern approach is along the Via degli Annibaldi, from which, however, the building is not well seen, as the rise in the level of ground hides its lowest story; and all the points from which the whole façade can be viewed are too near to permit a satisfactory judgment of its proportions. This is the more regrettable because the top story was not part of the original design, and the architect who added it was evidently conscious of the difficulties of his task, and handled them in a spirited and ingenious fashion.

The original scheme for the outer structure of the building was obviously inspired by the theatre of Marcellus. The elliptical arena and its galleries were surrounded by a double-vaulted arcade three stories high. For purely decorative purposes the Greek structural scheme of columns and lintels was affixed to the front of the Roman structural scheme of piers and arches. An Attic Greek would have condemned the device as inexpressibly barbarous; its magnificent effect, due to the curve of the building, is its complete artistic justification. This decorative use of Greek architectural methods permitted and even demanded a combination of the three orders impossible in a Greek temple. The columns of the lowest story are Doric and tell by their simplicity. But had the same treat-

ment been used throughout, the second story would have appeared light and the third positively flimsy. Accordingly it was necessary to strengthen the aspect of the upper columns, but without overweighting the columns below; and this effect was achieved by the use of Ionic decoration for the capitals of the second story and of the still more elaborate Corinthian for the capitals of the third. The structure was finished off by a narrow but highly ornate cornice, whose course can still be traced.

When therefore a fourth story came to be added, the problem of making the whole front dignified but not top-heavy was ticklish enough. The architect solved it by abandoning columns altogether and by substituting pilasters, but to give these pilasters a solid look the height of the pedestals was increased. The still graver difficulty of the new cornice was overcome with even greater ingenuity. What amounts to a false cornice in the shape of a row of brackets runs round the whole building, and these brackets served a structural purpose, for they carried the masts to which the awnings over the seats were tied. A strong cornice being thus suggested, it was enough to carry a light cornice round the roof line. Finally, to lighten the whole top structure, windows were pierced in it alternately above and below. It is an engineer's rather than an architect's scheme, but it is none the less effective for that; and in the whole matter of the decorative treatment of structural line the Colosseum succeeds as signally as the Tower Bridge fails.

The southern half of the surrounding arcades has fallen away and disappeared, and where the inner structure is thus exposed to view it appears to repeat the arcading of the outer shell. But this appearance is deceptive, for whereas the outer walls are elliptical the inner walls are straight and are perpendicular to the surround-

ing ellipse. The inner structure consists of a series of walls, eighty all told, radiating from the arena and rising in height as they move outward. Thanks to their outward thrust, there was no danger in tunnelling a system of underground passages under the arena itself.

These walls were joined by barrel vaults, and the external surface was levelled to carry the galleries of seats. The walls were pierced by arches to allow the public to move, and thus present their arcaded appearance. At the back of the second gallery, and edging the whole system of radiating walls, ran an upper wall pierced by doors and windows (apparently three windows between the doors over the entrances, four intervening windows elsewhere). On this wall rested the third gallery which was in part of wood and was carried back to the outer arcade. It had a wooden roof to which the gods were admitted.

The various supports for the galleries should be carefully distinguished. The innermost ring of stage boxes rests on the ground. They were parted from the arena by a railing, and in front are recesses where attendants were stationed to deal with beasts which attempted to clear the barriers and martyrs who refused to play the game. The two main galleries were supported by the radiating walls; only the light uppermost gallery was carried right back on to the arcades. The question thus presents itself: What was the purpose of this enormous outer shell? The answer is that it served as a gigantic buttress which held up the whole system of retaining walls. Such an application of the word must needs appear paradoxical to the modern mind familiar with Gothic work; but it is rightly used, and calls attention to an essential attribute of Roman architecture. A Roman building enclosed a space, and the finest Roman effects were obtained in

the treatment of internal space—witness the Pantheon. To Roman ideas there was something wasteful in the use of a buttress as such, and not as a part of the main structure. Of the buildings which have survived, only one offers an example of a buttress in the later sense. The Basilica of Constantine consisted of a gigantic central nave with three groined vaults. It was flanked by aisles, each with three barrel vaults, and the southern aisle still stands. The weights of both sets of vaults was borne by the great piers which separated the nave from the aisles, and as the vaults of nave and aisles were at right angles to one another, counteracting pressures were set up. But the immense span and consequent weight of the nave vault made it desirable to carry part of the stress to the outer wall. Accordingly buttresses were set over the piers and between the arches of the aisle vaults—real buttresses with arches pierced in them to ensure that the weight was carried right along to the wall. They are unique, and it is only fair to the Roman builder to add that though conspicuous enough now, they must have been almost invisible when the basilica was complete.

It remains to note the materials used in the Colosseum. Where the weight to be borne was light the builders were content with brick-faced concrete. This is the material used not only in the stage boxes and in the upper wall upon which rested the light third gallery, but in such part of the radiating walls as carried one gallery only. Farther back, where account had also to be taken of the second gallery, tufa appears in the lower courses of the walls, and in the extreme rear where the weight was greatest the tufa is reinforced by pillars and facings of travertine. Travertine alone is used in the outer arcades, upon which the whole mass finally depended for its stability. The blocks are beautifully fitted, but a sense of the inelastic nature of

the stone induced the builders to clamp them together with iron. Its use had the opposite of the intended effect. In the Middle Ages, when metal was scarce, the clamps were violently torn out.

These structural details were, of course, invisible when the building was complete and all its surface except the façade was covered with stucco and marble. In particular, some sort of covering can be inferred with certainty wherever tufa now appears; the Romans were well aware that the stone weathers badly.

Finally, it is worth noting that this well-balanced use of material was a comparative novelty when the Colosseum was built, as is shown by comparison with an earlier work which rivals the Colosseum in its Roman majesty, the outer wall of the Forum of Augustus. This immensely high, solid wall is broken into three sections by transverse cornices of travertine (in the Colosseum the travertine reinforcements are horizontal). The wall itself is built of blocks of two kindred stones, sperone and peperino, the latter, which is of inferior strength, being used for the uppermost section only. There is no concrete. The use of concrete in Rome dates back, indeed, to the great war period of the Republic. But it was long employed only in foundations. If it appeared above ground, the problem of facing had to be dealt with. Tufa was available, but was not a good material to carry outer decoration, and would rot if damp got in. Sun-dried bricks were even less trustworthy than tufa. But towards the end of the Augustan period the process of kiln-drying began to be developed, and from that time onward concrete was normally faced with triangular bricks, and, so faced, became the Empire's principal building material.

The Colosseum is the most fascinating building in Rome—though not for the technical reasons just

set out. Its human appeal is immediate and profound, and men who write from the heart must have been quick to respond to it. Dickens, for example, devotes to the Colosseum the bulk of such small part of his essay on Rome as does not describe the Carnival—now itself fast going the way of the gladiatorial combats. Even Mr. Bernard Shaw, who is often classed as an intellectual, ingeniously contrives to make an act of a play out of a Colosseum performance. But the *locus classicus* for the place is in Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad*, and as Mark Twain is now suffering from the oblivion which is wont to descend on writers who are no longer alive but are not yet classics, a quotation may be permitted. It was Mark Twain's good fortune to find a playbill.

ROMAN COLISEUM

UNPARALLELED ATTRACTION

NEW PROPERTIES! NEW LIONS! NEW GLADIATORS!

Engagement of the renowned

MARCUS MARCELLUS VALERIAN

for six nights only.

The management beg leave to offer to the public an entertainment surpassing in magnificence anything that has heretofore been attempted on the stage. No expense has been spared to make the opening season one which shall be worthy of the generous patronage which the management feel sure will crown their efforts. The management beg leave to state that they have succeeded in securing the services of a

GALAXY OF TALENT

such as has not been beheld in Rome before.

The performance will commence this evening with a

Grand Broadsword Combat

between two young and promising amateurs and a celebrated Parthian gladiator, who has just arrived a prisoner from the camp at Verus. This will be followed by a grand moral

Battle-Axe Engagement

between the renowned Valerian (with one hand tied behind him) and two gigantic savages from Britain.

After which the renowned Valerian (if he survive) will fight with the broadsword

Left-handed . . . .

The whole to conclude with a chaste and elegant

General Slaughter

in which 13 African Lions and 22 Barbarian Prisoners will war with each other until all are exterminated.

A criticism of the performance follows, containing matter some of which one must perhaps have been a journalist to appreciate. But there are touches of wider appeal. For example: "Upon the whole, last night's performance shed honour not only upon the management, but upon the city which encourages and sustains such wholesome and instructive entertainments. We would simply suggest that the practice of vulgar young boys in the gallery of shying pea-nuts and paper pellets at the tigers and saying 'Hi-yi' and manifesting approbation or disapprobation by such observations as 'Bully for the Lion' . . . are extremely reprehensible when the Emperor is present, and ought to be stopped by the police." And "A matinée for the little folks is promised for this afternoon, on which occasion several martyrs will be eaten by the tigers."

The thing is full of faults. The Colosseum was not under private management; it was in the circus rather than the amphitheatre that spectators indulged in interruptions often of a political character and intended for the Emperor's ears; gladiators were trained in Italy and not imported from Parthia, had only one name, used neither broadsword nor battle-axe, and did not indulge in trick fighting. Moreover, the numbers provided for the general slaughter are quite inadequate. Nevertheless, the description gets home. It re-creates the atmosphere in which these organized massacres became possible. The reading of it is enough to make a tract-distributing spinster long to see a bull-fight, and it thoroughly illuminates the state of mind of that friend of Augustine's who realized the horror of the

spectacle but who, having stolen one glance, could not again avert his eyes.[1]

That instinct for contrast which has always been so strong in Rome—Vergil's eighth book is its clearest literary expression—has caused the Arch of Constantine to be set up next to the Colosseum. The authors of that compliment betrayed their tactful neutrality in the religious issue by their choice of the non-commital words *instinctu divinitatis* (under supernatural guidance) to describe the providential character of the Emperor's victory. They can little have deemed that in the fullness of time it would convert the amphitheatre into a church.

The contrast is architectural as well as moral. There is no mystery about the Colosseum; it is good, plain common sense on the largest scale. But the arch marvellously achieves the impossible. Its exquisite harmonies are still patent, though time has dimmed the contrast between structure and detail. Obviously the architect sought to apply the happy proportions of the Arch of Titus to the structure of the Arch of Septimius Severus and to set off the whole effect by a well-balanced decorative scheme. Obviously he has been entirely successful. For the unity which springs from a feeling for scale and for the intimate relation of whole and parts, there is no other building in Rome which so well compares with Greek work. And yet it appears that the greater part of the arch consists of fragments picked up here and there throughout the city and joined together *ad hoc*. Critics differ as to the amount of older work in the main structure, though it seems agreed that the columns could not have been turned as late as the fourth century; but there is no

[1] The day I first saw the Colosseum was a festa, and peasants from the Campagna were dancing in the arena to the music of a couple of mandolines.

doubt that the reliefs are a selection from the work of the previous two hundred years. The faces of the Emperors showed upon them have been replaced and worked over, but it seems probable that Domitian originally figured in the medallions, Trajan in the reliefs of the central arch, Marcus Aurelius in the panels of the attic, and Diocletian in the triumphal processions along the sides.[1] The name of the genius who produced unity out of this confusion is unknown; and if the arch did not still stand to defy criticism with its incredible perfection we should assume that it must needs have been a nightmare.[2]

[1] For a full discussion, see Stuart Jones, *Classical Rome*, pp. 249, 253, and Mrs. Strong, *Roman Sculpture*, pp. 328–37.

[2] The same instinct for contrast has seen to it that the sole remaining trace of the most transient régime that Rome has known should be found hard by these splendid monuments of her Imperial greatness. A bare 100 yards from the Colosseum, at the corner where the Via della Terme di Tito meets the Via della Polveriera, is a building erected on remains of Nero's Golden House—also a transitory phenomenon. A marble plate above the door bears the heading *Empire Français*, and proclaims that this was the magazine where Napoleon III's troops kept their powder. Rome is tolerant of everything in her past, but it is curious that this inscription was not obliterated in 1870.

CHAPTER III

THE FORUM AND THE PALATINE

The Titus reliefs—Portrayal of space—Greek relief—Hellenistic developments—The Sacred Way—Graffiti—The Vestals' House—Statues and inscriptions—Flavia Publicia—Vestals and their relatives—A link with Britain—Caesar and the Forum—The Anaglypha Trajani—Imperial taxation—Problem of the rostra—The midday sun—Removal by Caesar—The later rostra—Under the Black Stone—The Imperial Palatine—Earlier palaces—The Flavian building—Livia's House—Reason for fresh buildings—The final expansion—A bureaucratic moral.

THE ideal way to see the Forum is to cross over from the Arch of Constantine to the Arch of Titus and to walk down the Sacred Way. This ideal can only be realized on Sundays; on week-days there is a charge of admission and the pay-box is at the other end. But a memory of the Forum can be confined to Sunday visits. It must have been an awe-inspiring walk for the country-cousin of the early fourth century. After he had been hustled through the crowds in the Suburra and had gaped at the Colosseum, he was taken past Hadrian's huge double temple of Venus and Rome and through the Arch of Titus to look at the workmen finishing the great new basilica. With such wonders behind, around, and in front he can hardly have had eyes for the reliefs on the unpretentious arch. But the magnificence of temple and basilica has almost wholly perished now, and the reliefs have become the great sight of this quarter not only because of their historical interest—they display

the sacred objects of Solomon's Temple—but because they are the starting-point of all modern criticism of Roman art.

About a generation back a learned Austrian startled the little world of students and scholars by declaring that these reliefs had achieved effects hitherto unknown in art and not again obtained before Velasquez.[1] Why drag in Velasquez? The mention of that most accomplished master of technique calls attention to the fact that the sculptor of these reliefs was ignorant of the laws of perspective. Aiming at an effect which he was not able to produce, he fell back on unhappy devices. For example, he reduced the size of his buildings in order the better to throw up his characters. Thus the arch under which his procession is about to pass is hardly high enough to allow the leading soldiers to get through it. Again, in the opposite relief, the sculptor naturally desired to give special prominence to the Emperor. The best he could do was to show Titus full face while the horses which draw his chariot are turned away and shown only in profile. The trick is borrowed from the conventional Greek representation of a centaur.

Nevertheless, it is perfectly true that these reliefs are quite different from Greek reliefs. The sculptor has created the illusion of movement. The procession is actually advancing, whereas the procession on the Parthenon frieze is, as it were, frozen. Here there is nothing of the serene eternal quality of Greek art; a passing moment is caught and held. The means by which this new and legitimate illusion is produced are at once discerned. Instead of being silhouetted against a background which grips and steadies them, the figures are shown freely in a surrounding space which does

[1] For further details of this theory and for a criticism of it, see Mrs. Strong, *Roman Sculpture*, pp. 107–8.

nothing to hamper their attitudes. In other words, the artist has begun to feel that desire to portray space which is the parent of all modern landscape painting. But it is noteworthy that he does not attempt to portray space itself; that involves perspective, and perspective was beyond him. He is content to set his figures in space by separating them from their background, and by this means he introduces space into the picture. Picture slips readily off the pen, and indeed, this artist has sought to do in marble what a modern would more readily do on canvas.

The relief thus raises questions which the almost complete disappearance of the pictorial record makes it impossible to answer. We have no Greek pictures. Pompeii has preserved to us an immense number of Roman pictures, but they belong largely to the fifteen years between the earthquake and the eruption, and the influence which is strongest in them is Alexandrian rather than Attic. Perhaps the paintings preserved in Rome itself are more illuminating. It appears that the Romans felt the absence of gardens in their city and sought to make pictures do duty for them. For this reason they liked a wall painting which suggested an open window with a view. To paint such a view required perspective, and the artists of the early Empire never hit on the treatment which gives perspective.[1] Sometimes, indeed, they got very near it. In the most interesting series of Odyssey pictures now in the Vatican there is a painting of Odysseus sailing up to the portal

[1] Ancient painting never quite solved this problem. But it advanced to the very verge of the solution. In the hypogeum found late in 1919, when the ground was cleared for the garage of the Roman Taxicab Company, is a large wall-painting showing a city with a garden adjoining—possibly intended for a representation of the heavenly Jerusalem. A road runs past the garden, and from the back of the picture works up to the gate of the city. There is perspective in the road, but not enough for the artist to rely on. To help it out he makes the road wind across the whole breadth of the picture, so that it does not merely seem long but actually is as long as the available space allows it to be.

of Hades. The contrast between the ship in the sunlight and the gloom of the rocky entrance almost achieves depth. But more generally the Roman artists fell back on another illusion. Though the surface on which they were working was really one plane, they knew how to paint pictures which appeared to be a series of planes one behind the other. This, too, is illustrated in the "Odyssey" series. It is not at all a bad convention. Much has been made of it in Oriental art, and much might have been made of it in European art—witness, for example, Paolo Uccello's beautiful battle scene in the National Gallery—had not Michael Angelo directed progress into another channel. It is easy to see how readily this treatment lent itself to the representation of the series of states of the same theme, one to each plane, and thus helped to inspire the narrative method of sculpture. Of this last there is no trace in the Titus reliefs. The artist has felt the unity of his picture; but he has not rejected the contemporary painters' device of multiplying his planes. On the contrary, he has multiplied them as much as the thickness of his marble would allow and has used his utmost efforts to intensify the depth between his foreground and his background. He was fully aware of the advantages which his material gave him over the painter and has shown great skill in varying the angle at which his figures are presented to the spectator. Above all, he has availed himself of the effect produced by surrounding space both on his composition as a whole and on the various attitudes of the individual figures.

Sweeping statements have been made about the novelty of this treatment and about the completeness of its breach with the traditions of Greek art. Such exaggerations defeat themselves. Can it be supposed that when Phidias was carving his Zeus for Olympia

he did not allow for the space between his statue and the walls of the temple in which it stood? Or that Praxiteles was just indulging a fad when he so set his Aphrodite that it could be viewed from front and back, but not from the sides? But these, it may be objected, are statues in the round, not reliefs. Greek reliefs are very carefully kept in one plane. The objection is true enough as far as it goes. The Attic artist was intensely conscious of the conditions imposed on him by his material, and it was his resolve to define them and, having defined them, to conform to them, that gave its peculiar quality to his art. All through the formative period of Greek sculpture he was continually fixing his problem within narrower and narrower limits, rejecting this or that solution as going against the grain of the material, until at last he had circumscribed himself to a very narrow path along which he moved straight to perfection. With relief, for instance, the problem was to represent figures against a background. Obviously the conditions demanded that the figures should not be separated from the background, and it followed immediately that they must all be represented in one plane. But the mature Greek artist went further than this. To maintain the unity of picture and background the figures must be shown in profile, otherwise they would appear to be stepping out of their background—a most disconcerting impression to be avoided even at the cost of monotony. In the Chiaramonti Gallery of the Vatican (XV 360) there is an archaic relief—with which the name of Socrates has somehow become associated—representing the Three Graces. The artist has done his best to make his work interesting, and to get variety has shown the middle Grace full face between her two sisters in profile. To look at this relief is to understand why the later men shunned its effect. The process of transition can

be seen in another relief, possibly of earlier date but of much richer artistic sensibility—the justly famous Throne of Aphrodite in the National Museum. The goddess faces the spectator, but her head is twisted round into profile and—most significant of all—her breasts are made to turn right and left. Such points as these are sufficient to indicate the enormous difference between perfected Attic relief and the work on the Arch of Titus.

This direct comparison, however, assumes that Attic art drew a hard and fast line between relief and sculpture in the round. The assumption is baseless. Among the conditions essential to perfected relief was clear visibility. But when the relief was lifted up on high and exhibited in the metopes of a temple, clear undisturbed visibility was out of the question. The conditions changed and the artistic treatment changed with them. It was no longer possible to carve a series of figures in one plane. Up on high, with the firm lines of the triglyphs on either side of them, their effect would be blurred and muddled. The conditions demanded something simple and strong, say, a pair of figures in vigorous attitudes, just what is found in fact on the Parthenon metopes. The centaur lent himself admirably to metopic treatment. His animal body was big enough and powerful enough to stand representation in profile; but his human head could only tell if set full face. So set, however, the head must stand out, not against the background, but against the body. It was therefore parted from the background altogether; it was surrounded by space; and the desired effect was obtained. Metope reliefs thus differ from frieze reliefs precisely by the step which they take towards sculpture in the round.

Conversely, sculpture in the round comes half-way to meet the metopic reliefs when it is placed in a

pediment. It is set, not against a background, but in a frame, and it must not look as though it were in danger of falling out of its frame. The impression of surrounding space must therefore just stop short of completeness. The pediment figures in London show, indeed, that the carving was carried round to the parts invisible to the spectator. But this was only done to ensure perfect accuracy in the fall of the garments in front. When the figures were in position they must have presented just that appearance of sharpness at the edge which belongs to relief and indicates material connection with a background ; must have presented it because otherwise the conditions of the problem would not have been satisfied.

It is therefore wrong to maintain that the actual indication of space in works of art was a breach with Greek tradition. It is not even certain that it was a new development in relief work in the strict sense of the term. Pure Attic relief admittedly knew nothing of it, but the distinctions of treatment which Attic artists felt to be demanded by the position of their carvings were at once too subtle and too dull for the Hellenistic mind. The age of Alexander and his successors demanded richness and variety, and there were two ways in which relief could be made to satisfy the new taste. One was by abandoning the unity of plane on which the Attic men laid such stress. The other—a daintier device—was to suggest depth by indicating landscape detail on the previously plain background. Both methods broke that union of subject and background which the Attic sculpture maintained, and both might therefore have been attempted together.

As a matter of fact, the latter method was tried first. The fact that it is, in effect, an effort after perspective, and as such is more properly pictorial than sculpturesque, accounts for its eventual abandonment. But it

is normal in Hellenistic work. A charming example is the bucolic relief (No. 214) fixed in a window recess in the Animals Room of the Vatican. Another instance is the large fountain relief in the Lateran (I. 37), though here the rich portrayal of animal life as well as the utilitarian purpose of the work prove it to date from the Roman period. Whether or no the Titus reliefs are the earliest example of the alternative treatment of figures in depth with intervening space depends on the date to be assigned to a charming relief, full of the spatial sense, of a baby satyr drinking in the Galleria dei Candelabri of the Vatican (No. 243A). In this piece a leg carved in the round is shown against a leg carved in low relief, precisely as the two rows of figures are treated in the Titus slabs. The subject is certainly Hellenistic, but as the relief was found on the Palatine it may have been made for the Palace of Domitian. In that case it would be about contemporary with the work on the arch, but the extreme softness and grace of the workmanship and the absence of any of those characterizing touches which Flavian chisels loved point to an earlier date, and perhaps Mrs. Strong may be right in claiming the head as a "gem of Augustan naturalism." [1]

The excesses of modern critical enthusiasts have made it necessary to deny to the Titus reliefs the epoch-making quality with which they have been invested. But when all has been said on the other side, they remain of quite exceptional interest. Not only are they executed with remarkable vigour and effectiveness, but they show Roman sculpture at the parting of the ways. They unite two tendencies which afterwards diverged into continuous narrative sculpture on the one hand and the representation of isolated figures in niches on the other.

[1] *Roman Sculpture*, p. 82.

The Sacred Way runs from the Arch of Titus to the Forum. It appears to have been deflected from its original course at both ends, by Hadrian to make room for the platform of his double temple and by Julius Caesar, or by Augustus as his successor, in connection with the new alignment of the buildings in the Forum. But for the greater part of its length it preserves its original course, though not its original level. It is the oldest street in Rome, as is proved by the fact that it is called a way—*via*. The Latin word *via* means a highway, and was applied to the main roads which later held the Empire together in an organic network. But none of these *viae* entered Rome itself; they started at the gates. The alleyways within the walls were often designated by one name—Argiletum, Carinae, and Suburra, like our Piccadilly—or if a word of similar sense to our street was added, it was *vicus* for a street on the flat (*vicus tuscus*) or *clivus* for a street on the slope (*clivus capitolinus*). There were only two *viae* in Rome—the Sacra Via and the Nova Via roughly parallel with it along the side of the Palatine. The Nova Via, too, is evidently very old, for when urban development has progressed to any extent the construction of a new street is not an event of sufficient importance to be perpetuated in its name.

The Sacra Via was originally a way of descent from the Palatine, and its distance from the hill is remarkable. It may be that after the Forum had been drained there was still marshy land under the Velia which the street had to skirt. It is also noteworthy that while the Forum was traditionally a joint market of Romans and Sabines the oldest streets running right into it are both Roman. From the first the Romans had an instinct for arrangements which secured the lion's share to themselves.

Horace studied human nature in the course of strolls

along the Sacred Way, and there are still human touches to be found in its neighbourhood. It starts by skirting the steps which gave access to Hadrian's double temple. On the fourth of these steps are graffiti, including a vigorous racehorse. A picture in Huelsen's *Roman Forum* shows other graffiti on one of the columns of the Temple of Faustina. They look conspicuous in his plate, but are in fact by no means easy to detect. They will be found about 4 feet up on the left (western) face of the third column on the left as you face the temple. There is a picture of Hercules wrestling with the lion, with a roughly drawn profile on his left and a naked woman on his right. Above this last is a figure of Victory very neatly done in points. The largest of the Forum graffiti is on the pavement to the left of the little passage which runs up to the old entrance-slope.

But the most numerous and most characteristic graffiti are the game-diagrams (*tabulae lusoriae*). The typical form is a rough circle with four diameters. Each player had three counters—coins or bits of stone would serve. They were set round the edge of the circle and the game was won by the player who first got his three in a line. Roman schoolboys still play it, though they prefer a rectangular board with the diagonals joined (a form also found in the Forum) because it is easier to draw. It is called "filetto." In other games dice were used to determine the moves along lines or word squares, and there are also boards made up of a series of circles on which a sort of draughts must have been played. The multitude of these boards in the very heart of Rome is rather surprising and confirms the literary evidence for the existence of a proletariat which did nothing and lived only for free meals and free games. The aisle pavements of the Basilica Julia are covered with these diagrams. Idlers strolled up under the portico, squatted down and

gambled away their slothful hours. Two boards have even been scratched on the lava pavement of the Clivus Victoriae and endure to betray the habits of messenger boys in the Roman Government offices.[1] The tradition of public gambling has survived all Rome's vicissitudes and lads pitching coins at a mark can be seen to-day in almost every street.

The human aspects of the Sacred Way are not exhausted by graffiti and gaming boards. It skirts the House of the Vestals—the only ancient building which still possesses the atmosphere of its dead-and-gone occupants. The house was entirely self-contained. It had its own mill and bakery at the east end of the south wing, its own water supply in the central court, and its ample kitchen and store rooms in the west wing. The living rooms were in the south wing and must have been extremely unpleasant. They were noisy because the Nova Via ran right by them, and damp because they lay right under the Palatine Hill. Even now they get hardly any sunshine, and when the Palace of Tiberius lifted its stories above them they must have been in perpetual shadow. The ruins show that the ladies were at great pains to keep their rooms warm and dry. The wall at the back was hollow, to allow of the free circulation of hot air. In later times, when Roman efficiency was declining and the heating apparatus did not work with its old success, air was admitted below as well as from the back. An air chamber was formed beneath the floor by the construction of brick pavements resting on pillars. The gorgeous but chilly marble coverings of the original floor were thus preserved and have now been revealed. The office of vestal brought wealth and unique social distinction to its holders; but as the ladies sat and

[1] But it is also possible to suppose, more charitably, that someone did them for a bet.

shivered in their rooms on winter days while the rain pattered down outside and rheumatic pains shot through their bones, they may have wondered whether it was really worth while. Perhaps too they may have known that their predecessors in Republican times were less magnificently but more comfortably lodged. The present house dates from the Empire; the older structure lay farther to the north and got all the morning sunshine.

Ranged round the court are a number of statues on inscribed pedestals.[1] The relation between figures and bases is, however, quite arbitrary. They were all found heaped together, ready for the limekiln, and the heads and arms of the statues had been hacked off to make them pile more easily. The happy, unknown chance which has preserved them is a measure of the destruction wrought by renaissance Rome on its own classical past. *Quod non fecerunt barbari fecerunt Barberini.*

With one possible exception, none of the inscriptions—and presumably none of the statues—is older than the third century. But this does not imply that the honour of a statue, which was restricted to head vestals, was of late origin. The earlier work perished in the fire which destroyed the building in the reign of Commodus. The house as we now see it was restored by Septimius Severus, and Numisia Maximilla, whose name occurs on an inscription on the north side, was head vestal during his reign. Its language testifies to the great social influence of the head vestal. It was set up by one Gaius Helvidius Mysticus "*devotus beneficiis eius*," in gratitude for her kindness. But the lady who used the advantages of her position to the utmost was Flavia Publicia, head vestal towards the middle of the

[1] One stands in a room in the south wing. It was moved there to serve as part of a mediaeval building now demolished.

century. No fewer than six inscriptions are dedicated to her. They are well worth a glance.

FLAVIAE Luci Filiae [1] PUBLICIAE
RELIGIOSAE
SANCTITATIS Virginum Vestalium MAXimae
CUIUS EGREGIAM MORUM
DISCIPLINAM ET
IN SACRIS PERITISSIMAM
OPERATIONEM MERITO
RESPUBLICA IN DIES
FELICITER SENTIT.
ULPIUS VERUS ET AURELius
TITUS CENTURIONES [2] DEPUTATI
OB EXIMIAM EIUS ERGA SE
BENIVOLENTIAM
Grati Posuerunt

"This statue was set up in gratitude to Flavia Publicia, daughter of Lucius, head vestal of most holy piety, whose admirable strength of character and practised skill in her religious duties the State has the happiness of experiencing every day, by Ulpius Verus and Aurelius Titus, officers carrying despatches, on account of her extraordinary kindness towards them."

The Roman Army knew nothing of our rank of warrant officers, intermediate between commissioned officers and N.C.O.'s. A centurion might be either a sergeant-major or a second-lieutenant; that is to say, the post might be held by a veteran ranker at the end or by a gentleman-cadet at the beginning of his career. Ulpius Verus and Aurelius Titus were evidently two young men whom Flavia Publicia had taken under her wing. She managed to get them selected to carry despatches—work fruitful of promotion then as now—between their legion on the frontier and the Roman War Office, and her *protégés* very properly expressed their gratitude—though, perhaps they had to borrow the money to do it. It is interesting to observe that distinguished

[1] The small letters fill out the abbreviations of the original.
[2] The abbreviation for "centurio" is ȝ.

and pious maiden ladies of "admirable strength of character" were already the terror of War Offices in the third century.

But Ulpius Verus and Aurelius Titus were persons in whom Flavia Publicia was only casually interested. For those nearer to her she could do more. The head vestal had a sort of controller of the household called a "fictor." Obviously it was not easy for men to be admitted into such an establishment, and the word fictor suggests that the controller was originally allowed ingress to carve the official statue and had succeeded in making his position permanent. Flavia's fictor has set up the following inscription, which does not spare superlatives:

FLaviæ PUBLICIAE Virginum Vestalium MAXimae
SANCTISSIMAE ET PIISSI
MAE AC SUPER OMNES
RETRO RELIGIOSISSIMAE
PURISSIMAE CASTISSIMAEQUE
CUIUS RELIGIOSAM
CURAM SACRORUM ET
MORUM PRAEDICABILEM
DISCIPLINAM NUMEN QUOQUE
VESTAE CONPROVABIT
Quintus VETURIUS MEMPHIUS Vir Egregius
FICTOR Virginum Vestalium DIGNATIONES[1]
ERGA SE HONORISQUE CAUSA
PLURIMIS IN SE CONLATIS
BENEFICIIS.

"Set up to Flavia Publicia, most holy and reverend head vestal, who surpasses all her predecessors in devotion and moral purity, and whose pious accuracy in her duties and praiseworthy strength of character have won the approval of the Goddess herself, by Quintus Veturius Memphius, Knight, Controller to the Vestal Virgins, in token of her condescension towards him and in recognition of her many kindnesses."

[1] The genitive was the first case to go in vulgar Latin. By the middle of the third century the carver is uncertain about it, and puts ES instead of IS.

Detailed enumeration of these kindnesses is unfortunately wanting. All we know is that Flavia had made her controller a Vir Egregius, or member of the order of knights—roughly a K.B.E. It is worth noting that in all the six inscriptions dedicated to her, emphatic reference is made to Flavia's exemplary piety. It may well be that the lady was extremely punctilious in the discharge of her duties and liked to be complimented on the fact. Still, the flattery is laid on so thickly as to suggest another explanation. It may be that Flavia Publicia sometimes threatened to resign and that all about her feared the consequences if her sharp tongue felt itself permitted to wag freely. Vestals served for thirty years—ten as learners, ten as priestesses, ten as teachers. After the completion of their term they might return to private life, but it could not have been etiquette for a head vestal to resign. The inscription to Caelia Claudiana states that she had been head vestal for twenty years, and she must have served at least twenty years before her appointment. But there is another inscription to a head vestal whose name has been erased—proof that her memory had been officially execrated.

OB MERITUM CASTITATIS
PUDICITIAE ADQUE IN SACRIS
RELIGIONIBUSQUE
DOCTRINAE MIRABILIS
C . . . E. V. V. MAX.
PONTIFICES, etc.

"Set up by the priestly college to a head vestal of noteworthy purity and modesty and of exceptional learning in the theory and practice of her duties," whose name began with a C.

The date is 365, just after the death of Julian the Apostate, when the struggle between Christianity and paganism was entering on its last phase. A good deal of the contemporary pamphleteering has come down

to us, and if a head vestal had been guilty of misconduct the fact would almost certainly have been noted. It has therefore been suggested that the lady became a Christian. But would not this too have been noted? Prudentius, it is true, speaks of a Vestal Claudia who entered a nunnery. But the name Claudia is too small to fill the gap, and Prudentius comes a trifle too late in date. It is therefore possible that the lady resigned, and it was thought desirable to remove from an honorific inscription erected by the priestly college the name of one who had set so deplorable an example.

To return to the influence of the head vestals, it was naturally on behalf of their own kith and kin that their best efforts were exerted. Terentia Flavola had a brother who appropriately mentions all his titles in the inscription he offered her.

TERENTIAE FLAVOLAE
SORORI SANCTISSIMAE
Virginum Vestalium MAXIMAE
Quintus LOLLIANUS Quinti Filius
POLLia tribu PLAUTIUS AVITUS
COnSul AUGUR PRaetor CANDidatus
TUTELaris LEGatus LEGionis VII
GEMinae PIAE FELICIS
IURIDICUS ASTURICAE ET GALLECIAE
LEGatus AUGustorum PROVinciae
ASIAE QUAESTOR CANDIDATUS TRIBunus
LATICLAVius LEGIONis XIII GEMINae
TRIUMVIR MONETALIS Auri Argenti Aeris
Flando Feriundo—etc.

Quintus Lollianus Plautius Avitus puts his consulship first because it was traditionally the supreme office in the State though it had long since lost all real significance. Next, as is proper in such an inscription, he enumerates two semi-religious offices. He was an augur and had been guardian by Imperial nomination

of wards in chancery. Then come the steps of his career in descending order—Colonel-in-Chief of the Virtuous and Valiant 2nd Seventh Regiment, Chief Justice of Asturia and Gallicia, Imperial representative in Asia (the Roman province of that name), Magistrate in Rome, Gentleman-cadet of the 2nd Thirteenth Regiment, Joint supervisor of the Mint. The persevering authoress of such a career certainly deserved her statue. It may even be doubted whether the archives of Whitehall could show a parallel record; but perhaps this is only patriotic prejudice.

It would have been fitting if this house of virgin priestesses had later become closely associated with the activities of celibate Popes. Such a development, the logical extension of the process which actually turned the precincts of the water-nymph Juturna into the offices of the Roman aqueducts commission, was at one time under contemplation. John VII, who became Pope at the beginning of the eighth century, was the son of the Greek keeper of the buildings on the Palatine. Aware of the historical significance of the deserted palaces in which his youth was passed, he seems to have conceived the idea of abandoning the Lateran and of transferring his own residence to the old seat of Empire. Roman conservatism was, however, too strong for him. He went no farther than the conversion of the library attached to the Temple of Augustus at the foot of the hill into the church—the S. Maria Antica of later times—excavated at the beginning of this century. Services were held in it for about one hundred and fifty years after its consecration, and it might have become the heart of a new ecclesiastical quarter but for the fact that its use was made dangerous by the threatened collapse of the buildings which overhung it. A new church, the modern S. Francesca Romana, was therefore founded in Hadrian's Temple of Rome. The old

church, after its abandonment, was duly overwhelmed by the buildings above, and centuries later, when the ruins had settled down, yet another church—S. Maria Liberatrice, now demolished—was erected upon them in commemoration of what might have been. It is interesting to speculate on the possible destiny of the Palatine had John VII's plans been carried farther.

Incomplete as they were, they involved the House of the Vestals. There was found in one of its rooms a horde of English gold coins of Alfred the Great and his immediate successors. The money was evidently "Peter's Pence" sent to Rome fairly early in the tenth century, when the Vestals' House was the residence of the papal treasurer; and in this way it has come about that the site associated with the oldest worship in Rome is intimately linked with the story of Britain.

From the House of the Vestals it is but a step to the Forum itself, and in the Forum the visitor inevitably looks round for traces of Julius Caesar. He was the greatest Roman of them all, and it seems natural that his mark should be set on Rome's heart. The inspection is disappointing. True, there is Caesar's Basilica. But nothing is left of the structure beyond some broken steps and fragmentary paving; for the pillars which mark its ground plan are obviously modern, and some of the broken marbles around and upon them will be found to be no less obviously Christian. There is also Caesar's Temple. But of that nothing remains except the concrete core and an altar base. The reality, however, is better than the first glance suggests. Not only did Caesar give the Forum its present alignment, but he determined the development of later Rome. He was the first town planner. His problem was the immense congestion of traffic in the Forum, and he began

to deal with it by regularising the line of the surrounding buildings which had hitherto projected into it at awkward angles. Going beyond this, he proposed to relieve the Forum of some of its traffic altogether. He therefore resolved to transfer elections out into the Campus Martius and built polling offices whose foundations still exist under the Palazzo Doria. The new arrangement at once raised a most difficult problem of communications. How was access to be made easy between the Forum and ground the other side of the Capitol and the Quirinal? A similar problem has confronted modern Rome in its development towards the north and has been dealt with by the tunnel under the Quirinal. In Caesar's day the line of traffic lay farther south, and the only passage which he found available was the hilly path which led from the north-west end of the Forum over the saddle between the two hills. Caesar resolved to spread the traffic out before it entered the gut so as to assist it to cross the shoulder farther along. To this end he built a new Forum to the north of the old almost behind the Senate House.

It was a most ingenious device, and was given further application under his successors. A series of fora, which bore the names of Augustus, Vespasian, and Nerva, flanked the old Forum Romanum, spread the traffic out and gave the public room to move. But these fora did not facilitate access to the Campus. The problem to which Caesar had offered a first tentative solution was finally dealt with in Trajan's time. A new Forum was built beyond Caesar's Forum on a site between the Capitol and the Quirinal which had been artificially levelled. It was justly regarded as the most remarkable public work in Rome. A column, 100 feet high, was erected in it which, besides telling the story of Trajan's campaigns, served " to indicate the height of hill and

ground removed in these immense works." [1] It is, however, certain that the saddle was not 100 feet high at the point where the column stands, and in an effort to make the Latin fit the facts, violence has been done to the natural meaning of the words of the inscription. There is no need for it. The inscription says nothing of the height of the ground at that point. It professes to indicate the height of the ground cut away. Now the apses of the great basilica which Trajan set up in his Forum ran right back to the Quirinal on the one side and the Capitol on the other. The Quirinal apse still stands, and is now a fashionable restaurant. To make room for these apses and for the road round them the hillside may well have been cut sheer to the height of 100 feet. (The characteristically Roman corollary follows that some of the ground cut away to make the Forum of Trajan was probably replaced to buttress the monument of Victor Emmanuel.)

At any rate, the way to the Campus was now clear. The barrier which had hampered the growth of Rome for centuries was removed and the level ground of the river-plain became readily accessible. When Trajan's work fell into ruin—what is left of the most magnificent of Rome's fora now harbours a colony of stray cats, fed, it is alleged, by the municipality out of moneys bequeathed for the purpose—the construction of another open space beyond it followed automatically in course of time. But there would be no Piazza Venezia but for Trajan's Forum, and Trajan's Forum would never have been built had not Caesar's Forum pointed the way; so that it was Caesar who began the process of shifting the centre of Rome round to the other side of the Capitoline Hill.

[1] Ad declarandum quantae altitudinis mons et locus tantis operibus sit egestus. The genitive is curious. Apparently the gerund is felt to be equivalent to a substantive—"for an indication of the height."

One of the secrets of Rome's charm is its trick of jostling the centuries together. It is peculiarly appropriate that the man who has impressed on European history whatever continuity it possesses should also be responsible for the magnificent jostling of the centuries at Rome's heart, should have brought it about that Trajan's Column should set off Victor Emmanuel's monument, and should be the link between the old Republican shopping centre and the trams and buses of the Piazza Venezia. So persistent and vital has his influence been that it is actually easier to trace its consequences on the Rome of to-day than to appreciate its working in the first two centuries after his death. A good many attempts have been made at the " restoration " of Rome as she was in her magnificence. All come somewhere near the truth, but their differences are eloquent of our ignorance of details. The answer to a good many questions is undoubtedly to be sought in the two reliefs set up in the heart of the ruined Forum, but that answer is itself written in a script of doubtful legibility.

The fine workmanship and the fact that the principal figures are beardless make it certain that the reliefs cannot be later than Trajan's reign ; but they may be earlier. The reliefs, long slabs of marble, were taken in the Middle Ages to form the sides of a small square tower. They were so well suited to their purpose that they may have been brought a comparatively long way, and it would therefore be dangerous to conclude that they originally stood very close to their present site. Both sides were decorated. On the one side of both reliefs are sculptured a bull, a sheep, and a pig in sacrificial dress—the suovetaurilia so dear to our schoolmasters. On the other side are narrative scenes. It so happens that when the slabs were taken for the tower the animal sides were turned inwards. They

have thus been well preserved and show the keen eye for nature characteristic of Roman art. The curl of the pig's tail is particularly expressive and lifelike. Still, it is tantalizing that the reliefs were not turned the other way, for the sides which faced outward and have consequently suffered damage are of much historical interest. An Emperor, no doubt the same Emperor, was depicted in both. But his whole body has gone from the one and his head is missing from the other. He has been identified with Trajan, but modern art critics are inclined to assign to Domitian work hitherto regarded as Trajanic. In this they follow the lead of modern scholars who have learnt to see through Tacitus and are inclined to allow special merit to any emperor whose memory was damned by the futile and reactionary Senate. Tiberius and Nero have already been well whitewashed. Lately it has been Domitian's turn; but perhaps the process has been carried rather too far.

The subjects of these reliefs illustrate two great acts of social policy. The relief which faces the Capitol depicts an act of charity to the widow and orphan. Its precise nature is known from other sources. The Government lent money on mortgage to farmers at a low rate of interest and the income arising from the loans was devoted to the relief of distress. Very large sums must have been raised. A bronze tablet now in a case at the top of the stairs in the Terme gives details of the monies advanced in one district of Northern Italy, and the list of borrowers is long. The table dates from Trajan's time but the policy of social betterment, so characteristic of the Empire in the second century, was not inaugurated by him.

The second relief shows men in uniform burning papers, and it is tempting to suppose that it represents Trajan, whom we know to have been a really great

soldier, superintending the destruction of War Office files. Scholars are agreed, however, that the relief depicts the cancellation of arrears of taxation from the provinces. It is a valuable piece of evidence that even at the beginning of the second century the Empire's financial arrangements were beginning to break down. In the end bad finance played at least as great a part as barbarian invasions and Christianity in wrecking the whole magnificent fabric of government. All social vigour was crushed by the terrific burden of taxation which, owing to the collapse of the monetary system, was largely payable in kind. In Trajan's day, of course, things were not so bad, and it does not seem that the provinces were overtaxed at all. The trouble was that the Empire had inherited from the Republic a thoroughly vicious system of farming the taxes out to the highest bidder. The Emperors never replaced this system by direct and certain assessments ; at best the latent evils were checked by the fact that officials felt the Emperor's eye upon them and were aware that proof of extortion would bring their careers to a close. But the provincials never knew their precise liabilities, and when an occasional bad harvest made it impossible for them to pay the year's dues they fell into arrears which they were never allowed to overtake. So things went on until some local restlessness under the accumulated burden attracted the Emperor's attention. The debt was then cancelled at headquarters and its extinction enabled the whole process to start over again.

Whoever the Emperor, the scene of these reliefs is certainly the Forum and its buildings form their background. If only the buildings could be identified with certainty ! But it is not even clear whether all four sides of the Forum are intended to be shown. Huelsen, for example, makes the suggestion—at first sight

extremely attractive—that the reliefs were set up in the balustrade of the rostra, on either side of the central opening, with the small subjects inward and the large subjects outward, so that the speaker, who faced east, would have represented in marble the three sides of the Forum which he could not see. But this explanation, for all its charm, fails to account for the suovetaurilia. The rostra were not a place of sacrifice; it was never the Roman custom to immolate bad speakers. And the whole suggestion falls to the ground if, as appears probable, the Emperor is represented on one of the reliefs as speaking from the Rostra Julia and not from the main rostra.

The mention of the word rostra unlooses the whirlwind, for scholars have torn one another's hair out in controversy about the successive positions of the speakers' platform. The temptation to enter the mêlée is irresistible. The best evidence for the position of the original Republican rostra is a passage in the elder Pliny. Pliny was a writer of the early Empire who set himself to satisfy the popular thirst for knowledge without tears. He wrote nice gossipy informative books which he probably dictated to a secretary after he had got up his facts somewhat hurriedly from the recognized authorities—to whom he does not always make acknowledgment. Pliny tells us that for a long time the Republic did without a public sundial. Until the first Punic War midday was proclaimed on fine days by the Consul's attendant who stood in front of the Senate House and waited until he saw the sun between the rostra and the "Graecostasis"—a building in which foreign ambassadors waited until the Senate was ready to receive them. Anyone can attempt to tell the time by this method. It is still the same sun although it is no longer the same Curia. The older building took up a smaller space on the same site and

faced in at least approximately the same direction (south). Accordingly a person standing with his back to the door of Diocletian's building occupies a position a few yards in front of that taken up by the consular attendant of the third century B.C. It is at once apparent that there can be no question of watching for the sun to get between two objects on the ground. First of all the sun is too bright to be looked at ; secondly, it is too high to be described as between two objects. It would indeed be possible to produce the line of a building up and up till it touched the sky. But at best only a very rough guess at the time could be achieved in this way and Pliny implies that the determination of midday was precise.

What then did the Consul's attendant do ? Obviously he must have watched the shadows, and it is easy to get an arrangement of buildings which would give an accurate result. There is reason to believe that the Comitium was oriented. The Curia bounded it on the north and faced due south. Now suppose—and it will be seen that the supposition is supported by what ancient writers say of the position of the rostra in connection with their removal by Caesar—that the rostra and the Graecostasis stood at the sides of the Comitium at right angles to the Curia. Then, assuming that the fronts of the buildings were straight, at midday, and only at midday, neither would cast any shadow into the space in front of the Curia. The Consul's attendant would watch the shadow on his left grow less and less. When it vanished he would shout "Midday." (The visitor can make the experiment for himself by facing south in front of the Curia at midday with a walking-stick in either hand held perpendicularly in front of the body. The shadows will fall clear of his legs. But at 11.30 a shadow will touch his left boot and at 12.30 his right boot.)

It remains to determine which side of the Curia the rostra stood, and there is ample evidence that they stood to the east. The Graecostasis is stated to have abutted on the Temple of Concord, which is known to have been at the foot of the Capitol. The Graecostasis must therefore have stood to the west of the Curia, and as this is ground which has not yet been excavated, some traces of it may yet be found. Moreover, it is known that during the second century B.C.—either at the time of the Gracchi or a little earlier—the scene of the popular assemblies was shifted from the Comitium to the Forum. But it is not stated that the transfer involved new rostra, and if the rostra were to the east of the Curia on the border-line between the Comitium and the Forum they would still have served perfectly well. The speaker simply turned round and faced the other way. Later on the platform was extended on the Forum side and given the curved front shown on a coin.

Here a difficulty arises. Away at the south-west end of the Forum are a row of little arches labelled "Rostra Vetera." If these arches were indeed the supports of the ancient rostra, we must throw Pliny overboard, for it is impossible for anyone standing in front of the Curia to tell the time by the relation of the sun to these arches and to the Graecostasis which faced the same way and stood almost in the same line. Accordingly, Pliny is thrown overboard to the extent of assuming that these arches supported the rostra as moved in the second century B.C. But there is no evidence for their removal and there is strong evidence against it. Asconius Pedianus was a learned editor of Cicero's speeches who wrote under Nero and the Flavians. In his commentary on the Pro Milone—a speech which Cicero had not the nerve to deliver but which he nevertheless published—Asconius explains

that the rostra from which the orator assumed himself to be speaking were not the rostra of later times but stood "by the Comitium almost touching the Senate House" (*ad Comitium prope iuncta Curiae*)—exactly where Pliny's story shows the rostra to have been in the days before the first Punic War. The line of arches, then, cannot be the remains of the rostra of the later Republic. In fact, they have nothing to do with the rostra at all. Plainly they served to carry the road—the Clivus Capitolinus—whose line was shifted farther down the slope to give room for the enlargement of the Temple of Saturn in 42 B.C.; and this explanation is now generally accepted.

Caesar moved the rostra, and if they occupied the position assigned to them near the Curia it becomes clear why he moved them. A crowd collected round them would block the way of approach to his new Forum. It is generally assumed that Caesar moved them to the site occupied by the elaborate structure of later date, portions of which still remain. But the only passage descriptive of the removal occurs in Cassius Dio, a Greek writer of the late third century, who says that Caesar moved to their present position the rostra which had previously stood in the middle of the Forum.[1] Cassius Dio is an imaginative and rather slipshod writer, and before any weight can be attached to his statement it must be reconciled with the far more distinguished authority of Asconius Pedianus. Can the Greek's "in the middle of the Forum" be harmonized with the Roman's "by the Comitium almost touching the Senate House"? Yes, if the words "in the middle of the Forum" be taken as a rough indication only. A structure which ran out from the side of the Comitium past the entrance to the

[1] *καὶ τὸ βῆμα ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ πρότερον τῆς ἀγορᾶς ὄν, εἰς τὸν νῦν τόπον ἀνεχωρίσθη.* (Dion Cass, xliii. 48).

Basilica Aemilia could be described loosely but with sufficient clearness as being in the middle of the Forum.

But Cassius Dio so describes the rostra in relation to "their present position." Obviously these words cannot refer to the rostra as we know them, for they themselves stood roughly in the middle of the Forum. They can only refer to the Rostra Julia which stood at the end of the Forum against the Forum front of the Temple of Caesar. The Temple and its rostra were both erected by Augustus, but it is clear that Cassius Dio considered that the Emperor's work perpetuated the site of the rostra as moved by his uncle. Nor is it easy to account for the Rostra Julia on any other hypothesis. Why did Augustus build the temple here? Doubtless because it marked the place of Caesar's cremation and of the column erected to his memory. But why was Caesar's body brought here at all after his murder in the Curia of Pompey's theatre, a mile away? Because the people wished his body to lie in state on the rostra—his own rostra. Again, why did Augustus insist on rostra in front of a temple whose design was already cramped by the smallness of the site? It is explained that the victor in the naval battle which ended the first Punic War set up the "beaks" of the captured Carthaginian ships as decorations of the Republican rostra and that Augustus, with his true conservatism, sought to commemorate in parallel fashion the naval battle which ended the civil wars. True enough; but if Augustus wished to set trophies of the action against a temple, their natural place would be the Temple of Apollo which he vowed before the battle and which he subsequently built in the Palatine. His actual choice is only explained if there were already rostra, and family rostra too, on the site of the Temple of Caesar. Here, then, Caesar's

rostra must have stood. No other site suits the facts and the sentence in Cassius Dio.

But now a real difficulty presents itself. The history of the rostra has been traced from the early Republic to Augustus and no room has yet been found for the magnificent, badly restored platform which is labelled rostra and assuredly cannot be anything else. The only explanation is that these rostra were not built until after Augustus' day. Negative evidence is never very trustworthy, but if Augustus himself built these rostra, it is certainly curious that he does not refer to them in the passage of the long inscription—his own record of his career—which mentions his buildings in and about the Forum. Further, there is nothing in the structure of the rostra which proves their existence in Augustus' time. The tufa blocks in front can hardly be dated at all. The pillars which supported the platform are largely of kiln-dried brick and must therefore be later than Augustus. Some of them appear from the thickness of the mortar to be considerably later; no doubt they were erected to support the statues which came to be set up on the platform. Of even greater significance is the form of the rostra. There was a broad spacious platform with a stately semicircular approach from behind. Such a structure is far in excess of the needs of popular oratory. But it would form a perfect setting for a great Imperial ceremony, such as is depicted on a relief on the Arch of Constantine or such as took place in Nero's reign, when Tiridates, the protected King of Armenia, kowtowed to the Emperor with all Rome looking on and received his crown at his suzerain's hands. It is just such a spectacle as Nero would have loved to stage, and the reflection prompts the guess that he built the rostra to stage it. As Nero's memory was damned after his death, it would be contrary to etiquette for any

later writer to name him as the builder of a stage still in regular use.

There is, however, one piece of literary evidence which suggests that the great rostra were at any rate not built until after Augustus' time. Suetonius, who lived under Hadrian, wrote chatty lives—especially the private lives—of the previous Emperors. In his account of Augustus' funeral he states (*Life of Augustus*, chap. 100) that two orations were delivered in the Forum, one by Tiberius from in front of Caesar's Temple, the other by Drusus from the old rostra (*pro aede Divi Julii a Tiberio et pro rostris veteribus a Druso*). Tiberius evidently spoke from the Rostra Julia, Drusus from the Republican rostra which Suetonius describes as " old " to distinguish them from the great rostra of his own day. But if these rostra had already been in existence, and above all, if Augustus himself had built them, it seems incredible that they should not have been used.

It may also be noted that the Notitia, a fifth-century official description of Rome, which has some curious omissions but is accurate as to its facts, mentions *three* rostra in the Forum.[1] The explanation given above accounts for them. Otherwise they are only explicable by the unjustifiable conversion of the viaduct under the Temple of Saturn into the Rostra Vetera.

On the other hand, the structure of the rostra makes it quite possible that they were originally a long narrow platform which was later extended in depth, and it must be repeated that the attribution to Nero is a mere guess. But modern work on the topography of classical Rome is full of guesses—so obscure are the details and so great is the temptation to determine them—and if the reader bears in mind that the foregoing theory is wholly unorthodox it is not likely to do him any harm.

Reference has been made to the boundaries of the

[1] I take this detail from Gregorovius, vol. i, p. 40, English translation.

Comitium. The southern boundary is the most interesting of them all. Directly opposite the door of the Curia is a piece of polished marble, the famous black stone, which Roman tradition regularly associated with the first beginnings of the city. It indicates the limitations of the Roman mind, that for all the keen interest which the men of the late Republic and the early Empire took in their past, none of them thought of digging beneath the stone. With the modern archaeologist the act is almost instinctive, but archaeology is a modern science. The stone covers the oldest object in Rome which is distinctively Roman, for though no one can read the famous inscription with certainty, its language is admitted to be Latin. But it is Latin only just beginning to emerge—Latin which is not yet quite a self-conscious language. For one thing it is not yet sure how it should be written. The inscription is *boustrophedon*, that is to say it runs up to the top and down to the bottom and up to the top again, as an ox turns in ploughing a furrow. Further, the alphabet is not yet formed. This is the only Latin inscription which has the Greek form P instead of R. Lastly, there is a hint of Greek terminology in the word *sacros* (later Latin *sacer*). In this last respect the inscription is illustrated by another of almost equal antiquity engraved on a knife in the Prehistoric Museum—*Manios me phephaked Numasioi, Manius me fecit Numasio*, Manius made me for Numasius.[1]

As to the meaning, the word *PEGEI* undoubtedly refers to the *rex* and the inscription may date from the times of the Kings, though it is generally attributed to the early Republic when Roman conservatism maintained a "king" for certain sacrificial purposes only.

[1] Here the nominative in *os* (Latin *us*), the reduplicated perfect (rare in Latin) and the dative in *oi* (Latin *o*, ῳ in classical Greek) are all Greek forms.

It is also certain that the inscription is original and was not re-cut at a later date. An example of re-cutting, done under the Empire, has come down to us. The inscription commemorates the great naval victory of 264 B.C., and now stands in the Palace of the Conservatori on a modern representation, derived from coins, of the column to which it was once affixed. A glance at it suffices to show that the later Romans did not understand the development of their own language. They were aware that in early Latin words frequently ended in a " d," which subsequently disappeared. Accordingly they gave this inscription what they took to be an archaic air by putting a " d " at the end of every word which in their own time had a vowel termination ! The result is something obviously impossible, with such lines as *in altod maris pugnandod* (fighting on the high seas).[1]

The inscription under the black stone, on the other hand, stands as it was cut. It is not prehistoric as the word is generally understood, but it does not fall within the acknowledged limits of history, and it is a pleasant thought to take away from the Forum that though there is much on which the classical Roman could instruct the modern student—he knew just where the rostra were, for example—here is something on which the modern student could most startlingly instruct him. In history the strict sequence of time is not observed, and Italy in the sixth century B.C. is a good deal clearer and therefore a good deal nearer to the antiquarian of the twentieth century of our era than it was to the antiquarian of the first.

The Palatine does not demand—and in its present half-excavated condition does not allow—the same minute painstaking survey as is bestowed on the Forum.

[1] As Sir John Sandys notes, *Latin Epigraphy*, p. 10, the quaintness of the Latin impressed Quintilian, whom Vespasian made professor of the Latin language and literature—the first appointment of its kind (Quintilian, i. 7).

Not that the Palatine is the less impressive monument of the two. A tranquil afterglow of Rome's magnificence rests upon it and clothes it with its ineffable, melancholy charm. The prospect of the Colosseum and the Appian Way from the Palace of Septimius Severus, and still more the garden above the Forum which keeps the courts whence Tiberius once ruled the world, murmur insistently of the vanity of human wishes and the transience of human glory—insistently but so gently that the mind is moved to acquiescence, almost to contentment, in the rule of eternal change which alone seems to regulate mortal affairs. The heart is stirred, not by the ruins but by the spirit that broods in them.

True to its destiny even in decay, the Palatine holds memorials only of kingly and of Imperial Rome. The greatest figures of the later Republic dwelt upon it; but their houses—save for parts of the building known as the House of Livia—have perished or survive only as foundations. Unlike the valley which it dominates, the hill is no microcosm of Roman history. Yet it holds much that is historically precious. At its western angle is a unique fragment of a wall older than the wall called Servian. On its western summit are traces, too much intermixed with later work to be intelligible, of a primitive settlement. The platform of the mighty Mother of the Gods still stands and is still planted with the evergreens traditionally dear to her divinity. Her image, a meteorite in a precious setting, was brought to Rome from Asia Minor early in the third century B.C.—the first of the Oriental worships to find official lodgment in the city and strange precursor of that other Mother to whom Rome now pays devotion. Of another temple there remains only the spacious approach—its steps in five ample flights. The very name of the temple is uncertain.

But in the main the Palatine is true to its title. It is a hill of palaces and bears traces of six sets of Imperial buildings; for while the Popes could move from hill to hill, from the Caelian to the Vatican, and from the Vatican to the Quirinal, the seat of Imperial Government was always fixed on the Palatine. The series of palaces, as they came to be called from the hill on which they stood, starts with the great name of Augustus. Underneath the Villa Mills is a court with rooms, two of them of elegant octagonal shape. The rooms form a suite and face due west. All view from them is now blocked by a huge mass of earth which formed part of the outer edge of the Circus. But the Circus was greatly enlarged by Trajan, and in Augustus' day the rooms may well have caught the afternoon sunshine. It is tempting to fancy that the Emperor, whose health was never robust, planned this suite in advance of the main block of the house as a private sheltered walk where the sunshine would warm his old limbs while he meditated the wise and subtle statecraft by which he combined the simple condition of a Roman citizen with the effective mastery of the world.

Tiberius did not care to live in a house which must have been full of painful memories, and built himself new quarters towards the western end of the hill. The half-excavated rooms near the Temple of Cybele and some of the complicated series of apartments overlooking the Forum are due to him; the rest, including probably the rooms under the Casino Farnese, belong to the additions made by Caligula. Though Nero did little building on the Palatine, preferring the virgin ground beyond it, lower-class Romans believe that these half-subterranean structures are Nero's prisons. It is remarkable how the man who wished that the whole Roman people had only one neck has

impressed himself on the imagination of their descendants.

The whole central area of the hill is occupied by the remains, as yet only partially exposed, of the magnificent Flavian palace which Domitian completed. His successor, Nerva, sought to obliterate the execrated memory by inscribing *Domus Publica* over its portal, but though the functions which took place in it were public in a sense, they reflected the splendour of the Imperial office. The *domus* remained a palace, and was not transformed into a new theatre for old Republican ceremonies. The plan of the State rooms has been laid bare. They run the full width of the hill from north to south—the Throne-room, with the Court of Justice adjoining, then the great central garden-court, backed by the State dining-room with a portico beyond. The gigantic, wrecked magnificence is so impressive that here alone in the whole course of his world-wide travels the matter-of-fact Baedeker is moved almost to eloquence. "This extensive hall," he writes of the Throne-room, statistical even in his emotion, "39 yards by 49 yards (i.e. 10 yards wider than the nave of St. Peter's and the aisle of the Basilica of Constantine just opposite), with its large semicircular apse which was occupied by the throne, and its six niches alternately round and square, containing the now vacant pedestals, was originally entirely covered; but an adequate idea of its magnificence can hardly now be formed, as it has been deprived of its decorated ceiling while the walls have lost their marble covering, the niches their columns and the pedestals their colossal figures."

As he goes on to note, two statues were dug out of the ruins early in the eighteenth century and were despatched by the Farnese owner of the site to his family museum at Parma, whence they might now very well be brought back. It may be added that

further excavations took place later in the century, and Guattani's book records the zest with which the archaeologists of the time noted the decorations of the Imperial lavatories which they discovered. The foundations of Domitian's palace are driven deep into earlier buildings whose rooms were not stripped of their marbles. The tantalizing glimpse from above, all that is now permitted to the visitor, suggests that they may belong to the apartments which Guattani describes. Really, however, these remains are of greater moment. Archaeologists consider them to have formed part of the vestibule of a palace which Claudius built on the site. The main evidence for the work is a block of marble, visible through one of the holes in the floor which yield glimpses of the lower palace. The block, which was evidently part of a cornice, bears the quarry mark TI CLAUD on its side Nero's fire would account for the almost complete destruction of the building.

Between the Claudian and the Flavian palaces nestles a little house. Its preservation in such a place is remarkable. It appears to have been the family mansion of the Hortensii and to have been bought and enlarged by Augustus. Before its acquisition by him it may have been the residence of Tiberius Claudius Nero, the first husband of the Empress Livia. It is probable that she returned to it—there was no maudlin sentiment about that remarkable lady—after Augustus' death and lived in it during her vigorous but comparatively secluded old age.[1] Its walls still bear paintings, now fading fast, of the Augustan age. The dining-room is decorated with splendid garlands of fruit and flowers which recall the wax fruit and flowers associated with

[1] Professor Stuart Jones infers her occupation from the name Julia Augusta on the water-pipes, observing that she became Julia by adoption. But as the pipe also bears the name of the plumber, who describes himself as a freedman of Domitian, the reference is more probably to Julia, daughter of Titus.

another female sovereign. In the room to the left are wall paintings of winged figures which were discovered by Roman renaissance artists and used by them as motives. The room was buried underground in their day and formed a grotto. For this reason the paintings were called grotesques. The term was equally applied to the class of work which they inspired and has thus acquired its present meaning.

The pavilion—for it is no more—must have been a welcome retreat for Emperors who sought an occasional relief in simpler surroundings from the glittering splendours of their life in Rome.

But the gradual extension of the Imperial buildings over the whole surface of the hill must not be regarded as evidence of the growing luxury and ostentation of the Court. The principal additions were due to the most businesslike Emperors. Augustus himself, whose later "house" was notably more spacious than his earlier residence, destroyed by fire; Tiberius, who first built over the western summit; Claudius, who invaded the central plateau; Vespasian, who planned, and Domitian, who completed, the great structure which replaced the Claudian Palace after the fire; Hadrian, who broke new ground on the farther side of the stadium; Septimius Severus, who raised huge substructures to prolong the hill towards the east, all were hard-working and efficient Emperors. To some extent, indeed, these additions indicate the transfer of the incarnate majesty of Rome from the Senate to the Emperor, but still more do they reveal the gradual systematization of the central Government.

Like all bureaucracies, the Roman Empire steadily multiplied its processes and extended its grip. In Augustus' time Varus appears to have lost Germany on his own responsibility. Corbulo, who might have recovered it in Claudius' day, found his advance checked

by orders from the War Office, and similar interference from headquarters later put an end to his splendid campaign in Asia Minor. The blame for this veto on a forward policy in the East has been fastened on that universal scapegoat Nero; but evidently the Roman War Office was beginning to get file-ridden. The period of vigorous organization, which bore fruit in the well-managed conquest of Britain, was definitely past. The proper circulation of papers had begun to matter more than the prompt investigation of their contents. Heads of departments, fearful of the consequence on their comfortable routine of the presence in Rome of a soldier whose demands for reforms would be made irresistible by the prestige of his victory, saw to it that Corbulo was recalled before he had succeeded too well. His portrait, a keen, tight-lipped face, is placed in the room of the philosophers in the Capitoline and the patience with which he endured the obstruction of fusty old generals almost justifies the curious allocation. But they drove him to suicide in the end, and his death marks the definite triumph of red-tape. In after-times Trajan was the only soldier who secured a free hand, and Trajan, like the sensible man that he was, waited until he had become Emperor, and therefore master of the War Office, before revealing the full extent of his military capacities and ambitions. But under his civilian successor, Hadrian, the old state of affairs was restored with almost revolutionary swiftness, and when Marcus Aurelius, a superficially precise person who mistook routine for organization, went to the front he was entirely under the thumb of generals promoted by seniority. Hence the tedious, costly, and unsatisfactory job that he made of the Marcomannic War.

In the third century red-tape attained its greatest triumphs. The frontiers were seriously threatened. No longer could legions remain comfortably garrisoned

in the headquarters which they had occupied since Augustus first arranged their distribution. Startling demands for troop movements poured in upon the capital. Inter-departmental conferences had to be held, new files began to be started with appalling frequency, the registry must almost have collapsed under the strain. There arose a cry for more room. Septimius Severus did his best, but it was not enough. The limits of the hill had been reached, but still the needs of expansion were not adequately met.

There was then arrived at, under pressure of necessity, a decision the structural effects of which are still visible. It would appear that originally the buildings of Tiberius descended the slope of the Palatine in a series of projecting terraces, so that each story was satisfactorily lit from above. The mad Caligula first upset this system by his plans for constructing a private access to the abode of his brother Jupiter on the Capitol. The departments now set a valuable precedent in acting on the proposals of one whom they had originally condemned as insane. It was possible, they observed, to obtain more room by building on the top of the lowest story a series of offices level with the floor above. It was true that their erection would cut off the light from the rooms on which they were built. Still the darkened rooms would serve for the storage of the constantly accumulating files; or visitors might kick their heels in them. The rooms were therefore built, and their origin can still be traced. Just beyond the point where the Clivus Victoriae curves round to the south front of the Palatine there can be seen, high above the path, a passage with a fragment of balustrade in front of it. Passage and balustrade evidently formed part of the original balcony along the façade of the building. Later all was closed in by rooms built up from below. Moreover, there was no end to the process. Once the

terraced ground had been thoroughly levelled up, the structures could be carried on arches over the road and continued on the top of the buildings in the Forum below.

It must have been a real grief to the Imperial bureaucrats that this admirable scheme proved practicable only on the north-western front of the hill. But to the east of the Palatine ran the road which led to the Via Appia, the principal highway to the south. On the south side the position was even worse, for here the Palatine was bounded by the Circus and even a department of State dared not interfere with the people's sport. On the north the nearest building was the House of the Vestals, whose sanctity long protected them. But an Imperial official was established in their quarters late in the Empire after the triumph of Christianity, and left his petty cashbox behind him when the approach of looting Goths drove him from his post. Beyond the vestals' dwelling were Rome's smartest shops whose upper floors were at first protected by their great commercial value. However, when the financial top-heaviness of the Empire began to ruin trade, the bureaucrats seized their chance and the arches by means of which the departments expanded on to the Forum level still span the lower stretch of the Nova Via.

But so bold an interference with business can hardly have been possible at first. In our own day an expanding ministry bounded by a high road, a football ground, a convent, a general store, and a library, would naturally build over the library, and the same course would have been adopted in ancient Rome, where the comfort of scholars was regarded with almost modern indifference, but for the fact that the library was for the most part unroofed and open to the sky. An examination not only of the library but of the remains of the Temple of Augustus beyond it will show how

both buildings were brought into relation with the structures on the hill above. The plan of the library has been somewhat modified by its transformation into a church, but the outer shell of the temple still stands. It presents two architectural peculiarities.

In the first place the site is irregular, and the ground between the rectangular temple and the market to the south is filled by a curious funnel-shaped passage. It may be that bronze army discharge certificates were once hung on its walls when there was no longer space available in the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus; but the passage would obviously serve as a registry. More significant are the remains of six buttresses in the vestibule of the temple and the great height of the building as compared with its length and breadth. Both these features suggest that an extra story was added, and further examination of the structure confirms the impression.

When the temple is viewed from within, the row of little arches seems to indicate the original line of the roof. The view from without endorses this conclusion. Seen from a slight distance, from the farther edge of the market to the south, or from the columns of the Temple of Castor to the north, the wall clearly reveals the line of the extra story. To-day the remains of the upper wall provides nests for bats and doves—reincarnations may be of the poor harassed readers in the library, as blind as the one and as gentle as the other. If they can still recall the experiences of their former lives, how they sat with fingers in ears to deaden the noise of sandalled messengers tramping over the roof of the surrounding colonnade and clattering up the stairs to the new departmental annexe, they may note with critical interest the statement of the modern guide-book that the library was built in accordance with Vitruvius' rules on a site at once convenient of access

and yet withdrawn from the bustle of traffic Encroaching as it does on the level of the Palatine, this additional floor spoils the effect of the hill towering over the buildings below. But the encroachment was intentional. At the cost of a mere aesthetic blemish the departments overcame the natural obstacle to their expansion. Once established in the Forum, they might have assimilated the whole area had not Diocletian smashed the machine and saved the Empire from collapse by establishing a field army dependent solely on the Emperor and entirely free from administrative control.

European bureaucracy is the inheritance of Latin civilization. As such it still bears the characteristics implanted upon it in its original headquarters—its perpetual demand for more space, its invariable preference for dark and pokey rooms. A visit to the Palatine at once illuminates the history of Government in England during the war. It was the Latins who first lifted the inhabitants of the island out of barbarism and in the crisis of their fate atavistic instincts asserted themselves in accordance with biological law. Hitherto it has seemed mysterious that a new ministry should have equipped itself immediately with the whole apparatus of departments and sub-departments and all their mechanism of files, minutes, and registries, should have housed itself inadequately to start with and should have expanded by way of underground passages and overhead corridors into neighbouring buildings whose inconvenience only accentuated the original defect. The Palatine offers the clue. Here the bureaucratic instinct was originally born and bred and here it necessarily acquired the habits which its devotion to its established rules still impels it to maintain.

It has abandoned its early home for ever now. A garden spreads green and spacious over its obscure labyrinthine corridors, roses bloom where files once

mildewed, and the chattering of magpies has replaced the repetition of official formulae. An atmosphere of tradition and precedent, a suggestion of majestic disregard of the turmoil of events, encompasses it still; but the light of day has been admitted and the air has become sweet and wholesome. So, maybe, Macaulay's New Zealander, his ears tormented as he stands on the broken arch of London Bridge by the raucous shouts of hawkers with their pictures of the ruins of St. Paul's, will seek refuge in the crumbling grass-grown purlieus of Whitehall; and, as he paces the abandoned corridors, and notes fragments of official portraits of Assistant Under-Secretaries of State still adhering to the mouldering walls, will wonder at what precise point, in the days of London's greatness, the ordered tranquillity of the Government departments became merged in the natural peace of St. James's Park.

III

THE CITY OF THE RIVER VALLEY

CHAPTER IV

THE PAPACY IN THE DARK AGES

Invisible Rome—Mediaevalism—Papal history—Transformations of Rome—Augustus and the new spirit—Constantine and Christianity—The papacy emerges—The Gothic Monarchy—Arianism—The plunderers—Byzantine despotism—St. Benedict—Gregory and his times—The Iconoclasts—Frankish intervention—The "Donation of Constantine"—Charlemagne in Italy—Charlemagne crowned Emperor—Condition and status of Rome—A vicious triangle—The papacy eclipsed.

INVESTIGATION shows the visible record of ancient Rome to be startingly complete. Of the fifty Emperors from Augustus to Constantine, all but a few of the most transient figures have left some memorial among the ruins or in the museums. The transition is accordingly easy from the pre-Christian Emperors to the Renaissance Popes. For they, too, have left their memorials in stone and marble and fresco. Their record is, indeed, even more complete because it is so much newer in point of time, though it shows its gaps, inevitable in a city which is eternal only because it undergoes continuous change; and since the Renaissance expressed itself in terms of an art re-invigorated but still classical, Rome would be an easier place to understand if it were possible to jump from Honorius, who died in 415, to Martin V, who was elected Pope 1,001 years later. But even in Rome some respect must be paid to historic time. Those thousand intervening years of tumultuous history have left their mark upon the place. It is a mark

felt rather than seen. Visible Rome is the work of the Caesars, of Sixtus V, of Victor Emmanuel. But there is also an invisible Rome, appreciable enough, but provokingly hard to analyse, which may be described as the Rome of Tram 21.

Tram 21 starts from the Piazza Venezia hard by Trajan's Column, and stops at the British School—a new building of still glittering travertine, puzzlingly reminiscent of something or other which finally reveals itself to be the upper story of St. Paul's Cathedral. But the tram does not take the direct route along the Corso. It fetches a compass of some two miles and twenty centuries. It skirts the Pantheon, and picks its way through a labyrinth of streets which pelt the susceptible mind with historical reminiscences, before finally plunging into modernity outside the Porta Flaminia. Tram 21 is a time machine eating the centuries at the rate of a couple every five minutes. But the evidence of their passage is impalpable. Between the Pantheon and S. Maria del Popolo there are fifteen hundred years with next to nothing to put into them. The mediaeval Popes have left not a wrack behind. Gregory VII, for example, the second founder of the papacy—he who felt strong enough to demand of William Duke of Normandy that he should do homage for his cross-Channel conquest—what memorial does Rome hold of him who so vastly exalted her prestige? Only his name put in to date an inscription in S. Pudenziana. The very churches betray their mediaeval founders. Their original columns endure; but their columns are loot from some Imperial building; and the rest is mostly reconstruction of the Renaissance or later. Yet it is precisely these mediaeval Popes who made the name of Rome mighty in the ears of their world, and even of our world which these last few years has been busy extirpating the last remote

heirs of the Caesars. It is incredible that such men should not have left a mark on Rome.

They have left a mark—but a negative mark. The Caesars built to last for ever; a thousand years of papacy sufficed to lay their work in the dust. This result was not due to mere neglect or to wanton destruction; it was the achievement of deliberate policy. Not by accident, but because the Popes so willed it, are fragments of ancient Rome enshrined in S. Sophia and Aachen Cathedral and Westminster Abbey. That was their work. They found a Rome corrupt because material. They set themselves to spiritualize it and make it truly eternal. They succeeded so entirely that their atmosphere still encompasses the diversities of Rome—the Colosseum and St. Peter's and the Victor Emmanuel monument—and magically makes them one. They are one because they are all symbols of Rome in her shifting moods; and they are symbols because the Popes made them such.

There is another aspect of their work, historically of supreme importance. The ancient world and the modern world both deal, in very similar spirit, with what they are pleased to consider realities—legions on the Rhine and battleships in the Pacific. But to the mediaeval mind these material things were not real. The reality was hereafter, and the world of the flesh served but to symbolize it. It is not enough to say that in the Middle Ages the veil between the seen and the unseen was thinner than it had been and than it has become. Rather there was no veil at all. The mediaeval men were good Platonists, though they did not read Plato. They knew themselves to be cave-dwellers looking at shadows cast by the fire behind. Some turned round and let the fire dazzle their eyes while they strove to see the realities that cast the shadows. But the more practical minds among them

sought rather by the aid of God's Word to interpret the symbols. Such were the men of action of the period. Gregory the Great is the first of the type. He won England back from heathenism; he sustained Rome when war and pestilence had almost destroyed her. But he was also the author of a most fantastic exposition of Ezekiel, and in writing of St. Benedict, who died within his own lifetime, he drew no line between fact and legend. With Gregory the mediaeval mind finds definite self-expression. After him the rest is easy. The Pope becomes the symbol of Christ, Rome of His Kingdom, the Empire of His visible Church; and symbols—a bishop's pastoral crook and temporal sceptre—are the subject-matter of the great controversy by which the whole epoch is racked.

If this were all, if the difficulty of mediaeval history lay only in its manner of thought so alien to our own, its study would not be the formidable and even repulsive business that it is. The more serious trouble is that the period is to all appearance utterly disconnected and confused. Human actions show all the purposeless violence of a volcano in eruption. Great men arise, dominate their times, and leave no successors to carry on their work. Migratory peoples crash across the track of civilization and vanish, leaving a trail of wreckage behind. The whole period is convulsive and ferocious, and its turbulent shapelessness is worthy of the Latin in which its records are writ. Moreover, the discontinuity which marks it is repellent to our own democratic age, which feels rightly enough that the peoples of the world cannot control events unless their progress is made regular and their leading men restrained from random adventures in political knight-errantry. In the case of the papacy the defect is peculiarly manifest. Not only does the institution suffer violent upheavals, but it seems as though pains

were taken to make its working spasmodic. Save when the normal process of election is itself rudely suspended, a strong Pope is almost regularly followed by a weak successor, the choice of men restless under the authority of a master. But the weak man proves unequal to his task, and events force the electors to restore the balance by a fresh appeal to strength.

The discontinuity is carried into the details of papal government. Just because one Pope holds all the threads of policy in his own hands, his successor is drawn from the cloister, so that his ignorance of affairs may force him to rely on his counsellors. There are times when papal history seems to move round in an idle circle. And not papal history alone. Not without reason are those ages called dark. Throughout their course mankind plunges blindly. There is no sense of direction. Immense energies, boundless enthusiasms are squandered on a symbol which at the last is rejected as no true image of reality. To what end, for instance, did the Crusades conduct? What end, indeed, could result from any mundane effort directed, as it was admitted to be, to the pursuit of shadows? Moreover, the indefiniteness of aim is made all the more bewildering by the very confusion of circumstances which helps to create it. New factors enter into European life —Saracens in one century, Normans in the next— and make further breaches in the fast weakening structure of its system, until at last there seems no centre round which events can be grouped.

Nevertheless, there is always one centre, even in the darkest ages, though at moments it is barely distinguishable. Amid the whirl of nascent and dissolving kingdoms the papacy endures, strong in its mystical principle—the very rock of Jesus' pun. Whatever else they may be, Peter's keys are certainly the keys to European history. For a good thousand years all

that matters in Europe converges on Rome—on Rome the place no less than on Rome the heart of Christendom, for throughout the Middle Ages Rome and the papacy are almost interchangeable terms. When the two are parted, as in the fourteenth century, the papacy shrinks into insignificance, Rome becomes a miserable decaying town, and Europe strains itself to replace the missing essential element in its life. So viewed, mediaeval history presents a meaning which runs through all its scattered, contradictory episodes. It can be conceived as a series of endeavours to interpret the great text "Render unto Caesar . . ."

The compromise thus dogmatically proclaimed has not yet found a satisfactory expression in practice. But the effort to express it has at least passed through certain definite phases. In the course of its historic development the Roman papacy has had to define its relation to three separate forms of political organization. The earliest of these forms is that of the commune—conveniently labelled the city state. The world as Christianity found it was a vast organization of city states under the general supervision of Rome. This system was destroyed largely by the action of the Church upon it, but the civic consciousness persisted in the individual components of the shattered Roman Empire. As was only to be expected, it was especially persistent in Rome itself. Mediaeval Rome is said to have been the theatre of 150 revolutions. There is no need to study them in detail. All fall under the same head. One and all are either manifestations by the commune or repressions by the Popes of the old civic ideals. Rather more than half-way through the Middle Ages, and largely under the influence of the old Roman tradition, this apparently withered branch of political thought began to put forth shoots. First in Pisa and Genoa, later in Venice and Florence, the city state

entered upon its second golden age. The establishment of a papal monarchy in Italy was in no slight measure the consequence of the papacy's response to this re-establishment of the civic tradition in communes outside the range of its immediate authority. But in the meantime the papacy had itself done much to set up another compromise more strictly conformable to its own conceptions. This took the form of a universal State indissolubly linked with the universal Church. Perhaps it would be too much to say that the new equilibrium was ever established at all. But the effort to establish it persisted for centuries and took the shape known to history as the Holy Roman Empire.

The Middle Ages are the record of the relations of the papacy with these two opposite political systems —the comprehensive empire and the exclusive city state. Modern times begin with the appearance, out of this play of forces, of a new scheme of political union in nations. With this last system the papacy has so far failed to come to terms at all, and the existence of that aggregate of national states which make up Europe as we know it has been made possible only through the disruption of Christendom. But the drama is not yet played out. The curtain fell on an act—or a scene—so recently as 1870. Of its four characters not one has yet made his final exit; for the ghost of Empire yet stalks the boards, and the spectre of an autonomous commune sometimes threatens to re-emerge. Moreover, who shall say what fresh personages are ordained to appear upon the scene before the great conflict of ideas is resolved into its final harmony?

The theatre of this great drama has been vastly enlarged during the past century, till to-day it comprehends the whole world, throughout whose continents thoughtful folk are everywhere asking how far the present national and democratic system of states

satisfies the higher ideals of humanity. It is an eternal question inevitable under any political dispensation whatsoever; and the Church of Rome has always felt it her mission both to press it on mankind and to insist on her own answer. For this reason the controversy has often been waged about her own seat. There have been times when the destinies of humanity have come to the issue in Rome; and though they now demand a wider field, only recklessness would contend that the march of events had finally passed Rome by. It is her unique position as a central point of affairs, her unique power to interpret the past to the present —whether it be the first century or the tenth that she is called upon to expound—that gives Rome her special atmosphere and makes her at once the most human and the most awe-inspiring of cities. To ignore her tremendous past just because it is perplexing and crowded with events, or for the even more unworthy reason that her stones do not shout it at the gaping tourist, is to do her outrageous wrong. Some notion, however summary, of what she has been is essential to any understanding of the form which she wears in our own day. Besides, the fascinating game of tracking Rome through all her transformations is worth playing for its own sake.

These transformations have never been purely external, but have reflected some change in the status and function of the city. When Augustus, for example, boasted that he had found Rome brick and left her marble, he might have added that he had found her a community of bloated profiteers and had left her the responsible head of an organization which embraced the whole Mediterranean world. Nor, in his treatment of Rome herself, was he content with making her external aspect worthy of the new destinies to which he had called her. He realized that the disruptive

tendencies inevitable in a system of city states must be checked by some deeper influence than terror of the Imperial legions, and that the Empire could only hold together if it were shown to repose on a principle which satisfied men's minds.

Augustus himself was guided in his conduct of affairs by a strong religious sense. But he was not the type of man to seek revolutionary expression for his principles. The old mythology could be made to meet his needs, and he found contentment in a personal devotion to Apollo, God of light and health and beauty. But he does not seem to have realized that he was thus impelled to set up a personal God, and that other men might find themselves in like case. His temperament made him more sensitive to the limitations than to the capacities of human nature and in providing in his effective, calculating way for the spiritual needs of his Empire he looked to the past, not to the future. According to the philosophy, already moribund, of the city state the fundamental question for a man was, "What must I do to be a good citizen?" To this question Augustus submitted a characteristically practical answer. In effect he told his subjects that they could not spend their lives better than in whole-hearted service to the Empire of which they were members, and that to this end they must be filled with a proper reverence both for the model and chief of city states, Rome, and for the Emperor in whom that majestic word was made flesh. This joint worship of Rome and Augustus thus became the established Church of the new Empire. The arrangement appeared wholly satisfactory to men whose main concern was with their duties as citizens. But the day of the city state was already passed. Even in Augustus' time it was no longer self-sufficing, but existed as an element in a governmental system which embraced half the

civilized world. But this Empire was at once too vast and too diverse for the average man to feel that membership of it filled and dominated his life. Thrown back upon himself, he began to put the new and revolutionary question, "What must I do to be saved?" with the various answers to which he became more and more preoccupied as time went on. It was from the East that the answers came—from Egypt and Syria, from Persia and Palestine. Under the influence of these new tendencies the centre of the Empire's gravity began to shift eastward to the meeting-point of Eastern and Western ideas, so that it was the progress of thought within the Empire at least as much as the development of pressure on its frontiers which finally led Constantine to establish a new capital on the shores of the Bosporus.

Though these new ideas of personal religion were at variance with the orthodox theory of empire, with one exception they found no difficulty in compromising with it. The Empire itself became, with proper logic, Voltairean in spirit as rigidity settled upon its forms, and was prepared to admit that within due limits a man's religion was his own affair, a hobby to be indulged in outside office hours, so to speak. The new faiths went farther. Their case was that by convincing the individual that his life was a progress they would stimulate him in the discharge of his political duties. They therefore tolerated, and even encouraged, the official worship of Rome and Augustus, not indeed as an act of religion, but as a solemn acknowledgment of worldly responsibilities.

Very different was the attitude of Christianity. Concerned as it so largely was in its earlier phases, not with the manner of life here below, but with triumph over death, and cherishing as it did a conviction that the Second Advent was imminent, it would have been false to itself had it paltered with the orthodox Imperial

faith, and would have apostatized from its central doctrine had it bargained with any rival monotheism. Individuals, indeed, fell away both in observance and in doctrine, but the Church itself was rigorously exclusive, and persecution was the inevitable result of its uncompromising attitude. It borrowed, it is true, both from the State and from other faiths; but its loans, which it was careful never to acknowledge, were devoted to its own ends so that it was even more dangerous in its borrowings than in its rejections.

Accordingly, when Constantine planned a new scheme which should give full scope to Christianity he was organizing a revolution. With him the Roman Empire enters upon what Gibbon has taught us to call its decline and fall, though it may with more propriety be regarded as a fresh expansion and development. His predecessor, Diocletian, had seen that if the Empire were to be saved it must be made despotic, with all the threads of policy gathered up into one man's hands. Constantine, like the man of genius that he was, went infinitely farther. He realized that unless established on a proper ideal basis the new Empire would only repeat the failure of the old. He set himself, therefore, to convert it into a theocracy, with himself as its centre. He was to control spiritual as well as worldly matters, and the bishops were to be his viceroys. With reason did the men of his own city call him the new apostle (ἴσος ἀποστόλων), for the effect of his action on the structure of the Church was far-reaching. The inscriptions in the catacombs show how strongly Christianity insisted on the equality of its adherents. Very rarely is there any mention of rank or title; even family names are generally omitted. But with the absorption of the Church into an elaborately graded system of government this equality could no longer be maintained. During the fourth century the

distinctions between the various orders of the priesthood were accentuated, so that at the time of its final victory over paganism the Church was as definitely hierarchical as the State.

Particularly was this the case with the episcopate itself. Just as he grouped his provincial governors under four supreme civil authorities whom he called Pretorian Prefects, so Constantine organized the bishoprics under three metropolitan ecclesiastics with the title of Patriarchs. The appointment of these authorities was not an invidious matter. There were three cities, Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, whose churches boasted an apostolic foundation. They were the leading cities of the Empire, so that their bishops naturally enjoyed a certain primacy, and they were so conveniently distributed that Europe, Africa, and Asia would naturally become their respective provinces. Two other patriarchates enjoyed a nominal equality with the three great sees—that of Jerusalem because of the traditions which attached to its name in spite of the destruction of the historic city, and that of Constantinople because its founder had made it a new Rome. Through these patriarchs, too, a strong Emperor could effectively control the Church, and the proceedings of the Council of Nicaea showed that ultimately his control was real enough, however tactfully it might be exercised. Had the Empire endured, the Church might have become organized, as later in Tsarist Russia, into a Holy Synod, with the Emperor as its chairman. But events nullified Constantine's intentions. As matters worked out, Constantinople was the only patriarchate which could be kept in permanent subjection to the Imperial authority. Of the other sees, Jerusalem never emerged from insignificance, and Antioch and Alexandria, after entangling themselves in heresy, were overwhelmed by the rising flood of Islam.

For Rome was reserved a special destiny. The only Church of Apostolic foundation in the West, her position was further strengthened by the collapse of the Western Empire, which left her the isolated custodian of Latin civilization. She was thus able to reveal the full meaning of Constantine's hierarchical reorganization of the Church. Before him there were Bishops of Rome; through him they became Popes. Even before the collapse of the Empire the Latin Church —it had abandoned the official use of Greek about the middle of the third century—had asserted a manful independence. The action of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, in excluding the Emperor Theodosius from church until he had repented of his sins, is justly celebrated in ecclesiastical history. But it is not until after the first sack of Rome that the papacy emerges into the full light of political day, though Pope Innocent I may have been one of the ambassadors who waited on Alaric. Alaric's treatment of Rome determined the city's whole future. He had reduced her to beggary. Executing his plans with Teutonic thoroughness, he had first exhausted her surplus wealth by an enormous ransom, and had afterwards carried off every scrap of portable loot on which his soldiers could lay hands in the course of three days' search (A.D. 410). When he had done with her, Rome was too poor [1] to buy soldiers to defend her walls or corn to feed her population.

In the crisis the Popes began to show their quality. Thanks partly to the spread of Christianity and partly to the exemption of its property from taxation, the Church had now become the largest landowner in the Empire. She now used her wealth to feed her people. But she did more. She revealed an innate tendency

[1] The sack and its effects were fatal to Rome's bronze statues, said to be 3,785 in number (Gregorovius, i. 79).

to govern. It was not an accident, but a characteristically Roman touch that in the early Church the archdeaconry of the city was the natural stepping-stone to its bishopric. A feature which was peculiar to the Roman mind, and which finally won for Rome the sovereignty of the world, was its conception of authority. In the Roman view there was about authority nothing capricious or incidental. It was not the chance right of the stronger. It was an almost palpable thing to be described by a definite name, *imperium*, and to be transmitted by a legal process. Its disappearance was unthinkable. So long as there was Rome there must needs be a Roman imperium. It passed, again as a matter of need, to whomsoever was capable of wielding it, and in the early fifth century, when the Emperor had shrunk to shadowy impotence, it was necessarily grasped by the Popes.

To Pope Leo the Great (440–61) fell its first definite exercise. During his troubled pontificate Rome was twice at the mercy of a foreign conqueror. In 452, when Attila, encamped in Lombardy, was wondering whether the Roman plum was worth the plucking, an embassy was sent to implore his mercy. It consisted of the consul, the chief of the senate, and the bishop —between them completely representative of the authority in the city. The fact that Attila, a man of the steppe, who doubted whether his horses would find fodder in the central Italian uplands, finally turned away from Rome has led the Church to glorify this embassy of Leo's. But, in fact, the Pope did greater work in the still greater crisis of 455. The Vandal, whose name it is now fashionable to spell Gaiseric, landed at Ostia, and Leo went down the Tiber in a vain effort to avert the catastrophe. He failed, and the city endured a second sack, which began the ruin of its public buildings by stripping them of their

precious fixtures ; but when life gradually revived after the Vandal terror it was not forgotten that in the moment of supreme danger the bishop alone had stood forward as the city's spokesman.[1]

From this time dates the political authority of the Popes, which was soon to be made manifest. For in another twenty years the Imperial figurehead [2] had been jettisoned and a Gothic kingdom was established in Italy. Theodoric (493–526), the principal figure of this epoch, ruled by virtue of a dual authority. He was King of his own Goths, but *patricius* of the Romans. The word *patricius* was of Constantine's devising, and was intended as a title of honour to be conferred on governors of provinces and on foreign chiefs. It was thus useful in obscuring the gradual loss by Constantinople of all real authority in Western Europe. The title was adopted by the barbarian generals who controlled the later puppet Emperors, and so came to be borne by the one foreigner who was master of Italy for the time being. Taken over in this semi-regal sense by Odovacar, Theodoric's forerunner, it involved control over all authority in Italy, the papacy included. The election of Popes thus came to be regulated from Ravenna, the Gothic capital—though Rome tried to cancel the obnoxious arrangement as early as 502—and at the stormy close of his reign Theodoric went so far as to nominate a Pope (Felix IV, 526). The papacy was thus clearly seen to be working in subordinate alliance with the Government at Ravenna. Its political power was

[1] Thrice, at moments of crisis, has the Church owed a debt to women. Pope Leo's hands were strengthened by the support of Galla Placidia, daughter, sister and mother of Emperors ; Gregory VII could rely on the unswerving devotion of Matilda, Countess of Tuscany ; and at the end of the Avignon period the Popes were encouraged by St. Catherine of Siena during the difficult days of their return to Rome and the ensuing schism.

[2] Valentinian III (425) was the last Emperor who governed as well as reigned.

consequently increased, particularly when the effort to maintain the Gothic kingdom after Theodoric's death led to its formal investiture with judicial authority. But its independence was imperilled, and would have been hopelessly compromised if Felix IV and his successor, both creatures of the Gothic Government, had succeeded in their endeavour to nominate the next Pope and so reduce election to an empty form.

Fortunately for the papacy, development along these dangerous lines was stopped by the surprising renewal of strength in the Greek Empire and the consequent restoration of Byzantine rule in Italy. In any case the relationship could not have endured for long because the Goths were heretics and the Popes were already the special champions of orthodoxy. Our own country is to some degree responsible for the first emphatic assertion of Rome's position in this regard. Leo the Great was moved to assert his rights as the successor of St. Peter by his alarm at the spread of a heresy known as Pelagianism, which disputed original sin in the interests of the freedom of the will ; and Pelagius, the author of the false doctrine, was of British birth. Happily we are not to blame for the Arian heresy by which the Goths were tainted. Its history is curious. Condemned by the Council of Nicaea (325), it was extinct at the beginning of the sixth century among both Greek- and Latin-speaking Christians ; but it was almost universal among Christianized barbarians. It found its origin in the view, held by all schools of philosophy of the later Empire, that God was a transcendent being, altogether above and beyond this world ; for since God was obviously perfect, and this world was no less obviously imperfect, contact with it would sully his perfection. It followed that Christ could not be regarded as a final and complete revelation of God. Arianism, in fact, came very near saying,

" There is but one God, and Jesus is His prophet," and the form in which Christianity first conquered the barbarian West is thus similar to the Islamic doctrine which somewhat later prevailed among the wilder peoples of the East.

The Goths were all Arians, but as they were masters of Italy, and were themselves tolerant enough of orthodoxy, the Popes found it prudent to come to terms with them. A church was even assigned to them in Rome itself,[1] but with this exception public worship in the city fell wholly within the Pope's province. There was thus brought to a close that co-operation between Pope and Emperor in providing churches which had begun with Constantine. Besides presenting the Pope with a palace, the Lateran, which had been part of his wife's dowry, Constantine built shrines over the graves of St. Peter and St. Paul. Building material, however, was hard to come by, and in the case of St. Peter's at any rate it seems clear that Constantine took what he wanted from the adjacent Circus of Caligula. He may therefore be held to have inaugurated the practice of despoiling ancient buildings in the interests of the Church.

The work of destruction must have been systematized during the following century, for Pope Sixtus III (432) showed himself splendidly audacious in his plunderings. He it was who set up the porphyry columns in the Lateran baptistery, and who built the many-pillared basilica—still enclosed in S. Maria Maggiore—in honour of the Virgin, whom the Council of Ephesus had lately graced with the title " Mother of God." The Basilica Aemilia in the Forum appears to have been among the earliest buildings to be despoiled, perhaps because it was never properly restored after the fire, of which

[1] The memory of the concession is preserved in the name, S. Agata dei Goti, of the convent which now occupies its site.

its floor still shows the trace. The pillars of pavonazetto marble which stood in S. Paolo Fuori until it was burnt down a hundred years ago were taken from it; and it may have provided the similar pillars which still stand in S. Lorenzo. Violent hands were also laid on the porticoes of the Campus. Their pillars were removed to provide new porticoes leading to the principal churches. The damage done by the Vandals in wrenching fixtures from the more splendid temples no doubt gave a further impetus to the work of destruction. It continued for half a century, and was in full vigour under Pope Symmachus, a great builder, and therefore a great destroyer, at the beginning of Theodoric's reign, but a temporary halt was imposed by the consolidation of Theodoric's power. The Gothic King was proud of Rome, and sought to maintain its crumbling monuments; nor was he likely to tolerate their demolition to provide material for churches in which he could not himself worship.

In his reign, therefore, begins the process—unhappily not carried far enough—of converting pagan buildings to Christian uses. The first step was taken by Felix IV (Theodoric's own nominee), who threw together two buildings in Vespasian's form to make the Church of SS. Cosmo and Damian, and a similar transformation of other pagan edifices accounts for whatever has been preserved of the buildings surrounding the Forum. When the Gothic kingdom fell, the chief monuments of the ancient city were substantially undamaged; Procopius, the eye-witness and historian of the war which followed, notes that most of its temples were standing in his time. But a new phase opens with the occupation of Rome by Justinian's general, Belisarius (536). The city then entered upon the long agony of the Gothic War—really the conflict between orthodoxy and Arianism—during which it changed

hands five times. Its Gothic besiegers cut the aqueducts, with the result that the great baths became useless, fell into ruins, and were treated as quarries, while the water ran to waste and, turning the Campagna into a swamp, provided Rome with what for centuries proved her most successful rampart against foreign invaders —her fever. Cut off from the world and deprived of such material aid as the Church might have furnished from her estates, Rome fell into utter misery. The end—or what for any place but Rome would have been the end—came in 547, when the Gothic King Totila, having at last got possession of the city, threw down a third of its walls and drove its surviving population out into the countryside. For forty days—so runs the tale—Rome stood ruined and desolate, not a soul within her gates.

As life slowly returned to her—fifty years later Gregory the Great had cause to groan over her wretched state—she found herself in the grip of the Byzantine despotism. The phase lasted for a couple of centuries, and the subordination of the papacy was emphasized throughout. Even Gregory the Great writes to Constantinople in terms of humble self-abasement. Control was asserted at once. Scarcely had Belisarius entered Rome when he deposed a Pope on suspicion of intrigue with the Goths, and over a century later another Pope was summarily bidden from his see to Constantinople, where he died a prisoner. Papal elections remained free, it is true, but ratification had to be obtained from the Imperial exarch at Ravenna, who was, in fact, nothing but the old patricius translated into Greek. Pains were accordingly taken to elect men likely to be acceptable to the authorities. In the earlier years of the Byzantine period the choice tended to fall on clerics who had acted as papal nuncios at the Imperial Court, and Gregory himself owed his

election to his occupacy of this post. But as the influence of Constantinople in Rome grew stronger it became customary to curry favour by electing foreigners, and from 685 onwards a rapid succession of Greeks and Syrians occupied the papal chair.[1] Yet even these obsequious priests were turned into good Latins by the circumstances of their position, and Zacharias (741), the last of the Greek Popes, actually obtained a substantial donation of land from the embarrassed Emperor Constantine V.

At the same time, however, certain forces, both external and internal, were at work to strengthen the papal power. The Pope was a convenient card in the Emperor's hand to be played either against an exarch at Ravenna who was tempted to assert his independence, or against a patriarch of Constantinople who was over-critical of his sovereign's morals. Justinian himself, in his organization of the Government of Italy, increased the judicial powers which the Popes had enjoyed under the Gothic rule; and it was the bloodthirsty tyrant Phocas who definitely acknowledged the ecclesiastical supremacy of Rome over Constantinople. Moreover, the circumstances of the time forced power into the hands of a strong Pope, and there never was a stronger Pope than Gregory the Great. Rome was far from Ravenna, Ravenna far from Constantinople, but the need was immediate. On the top of all its other miseries the city was smitten by pestilence, and though, as his celebrated inaugural sermon shows, Gregory conceived it his function to lead his people through the dark days preceding the Second Advent, he was too good a Roman to neglect the immediate practical business of government. It is not too much to say that in his hands the papacy became a temporal power. Using the wealth that

[1] The first Greek Pope was elected as early as 642.

came to him from the estates of the Church in Latium, Southern Italy, and Sicily, he nursed the sick, fed the hungry, and clothed the poor.

Nor was it only in administrative matters that the Church revealed her strength. The presence in Italy of the Arian Goths, the misery—so acute that it threatened a pagan revival [1]—which had followed the collapse of their rule, the irruptions of the pagan Lombards, and, later still, the alarming spread of Islam throughout the East, called out all the latent forces of Latin Christianity. St. Benedict, who was born about 480 and died some sixty-five years later, was the first of the great Latin Churchmen. It would be impossible to overestimate the services which he rendered both to the Church and to civilization. He is one of the greatest figures in history, and is not the less worth study because he anticipated many of the cardinal doctrines of Karl Marx. He perceived that society required to be reconstructed in accordance with the new ideas that had come into the world, and it is more than a coincidence that 529, the year which saw the term of his experiments at Subiaco and the foundation of his fully organized monastery on Monte Cassino, was also the year in which Justinian finally closed the schools of pagan philosophy at Athens.

St. Benedict laid down both a manner and an aim of life. Man, he held, should work for the glory of God. His days must therefore be passed according to a moral rule, else he could not hope to achieve a spiritual end. And, since it was clearly impossible for such a life to be led amid the surrounding turmoil and anarchy, St. Benedict inevitably sought his means in monasticism. But it was not the grim, ascetic, solitary

[1] In the worst days of the Gothic siege of Rome it was found that the gates of the Temple of Janus had been privily reopened.

monasticism which had spread from Egypt into Western Europe. These harsh penances, St. Benedict realized from his own experience, might fill a man with the thought of God, but at the price of making him useless to his fellow-mortals. His own rule, indeed, was severe enough—he had all St. Jerome's loathing of the luxury and worldliness which had crept into the Church—but it was not positively unhealthy. Moreover, the rule was based on the steady organized work of the whole community of monks, and it was precisely in this insistence on organization that its supreme value lay. In the Saint's own day the work undertaken was mainly concerned with the elementary business of raising food in a ravaged and starving country. But the rule gave scope for the pursuit of learning and for the propagation of the faith. It is on account of their services to scholarship that the Benedictines are principally honoured in modern times, and the same honour has been theirs throughout the whole history of their order. Both before and after Charlemagne such knowledge as the world still held was preserved by Benedictine monks in their cloisters, and not only preserved but turned to practical account. From them sprang that wonderful impetus to building which after the year 1000, when men were once satisfied that the world was not yet coming to an end, filled Europe with glorious churches. From them, too, came that keen appreciation of economic conditions which brought prosperity to waste lands—to that Yorkshire, for example, which the Conqueror's sword had so effectively devastated.

But all these glories were undreamt of in the sixth century. The immediate need was to make headway against the flood of Lombard destruction which began to pour into Italy in 568. Monte Cassino showed the Church not only how to preserve itself in face of the

invading hordes, but how to set about their conversion, and the great task was taken up with a zeal which ensured its early success. In Gregory the Great the new practical, enthusiastic spirit found its fullest expression. There was a good deal of the mystic in the man who allegorized Ezekiel, had the vision of an angel as he walked in procession through Rome, and was satisfied that his urgent prayers had redeemed Trajan from hell. But the metaphysics of the faith were already settled, and in any case speculation would have failed to satisfy Gregory's energetic mind. He was, above all things, a man of action called to high administrative office in a world that stood in sore need of government, and it is not an accident that he was the first Pope to style himself *Servus servorum Dei*. For all her tremendous and pressing problems, Italy did not offer him sufficient scope; and it was under his impulse that the first Benedictine monastery to be established beyond her frontiers was founded by Augustine at Canterbury.

It was thanks to the Benedictine movement that in the days of her complete political servitude and of her almost hopeless struggle against physical misfortunes the Church became self-conscious and developed her brave crusading spirit. The names of Roman churches are evidence of the change. In the sixth century Christianity was concerned to transform paganism. The Temple of Maxentius' son Romulus, for example, was one of the buildings which Felix IV converted into a place of worship. The ill-formed archaeology of the time took it to be the Temple of Romulus and Remus, and the two pagan heroes were accordingly replaced by the two Christian saints Cosmas and Damian. Even as late as 608, when Pope Boniface V received the Pantheon in gift from Phocas, he consecrated it to the Virgin and all the Martyrs because it was thought to

have been dedicated to Cybele and all the gods.[1] But a generation later this phase of thought has passed away. The Church no longer builds upon paganism, transforming it to her own purposes, but relies on the record of Christianity and perpetuates the names of her triumphant martyrs. When the Senate House was converted into a church it became S. Adriano, and in the same spirit new churches were built to S. Agnese, S. Teodoro, and the Quattro Coronati; and even in the threatening days of the Lombard invasion, when timorous Romans must have shivered within their impregnable walls, Pope Pelagius II bravely adventured beyond their circuit that he might remodel S. Lorenzo. The literary movement is strictly parallel. Theodoric's great minister, Boethius, had written a Christian treatise based on the old learning and fitly entitled *The Consolation of Philosophy*. But less than a century later the Church had ceased to look beyond her own history, and the best known of Gregory the Great's propagandist dialogues is concerned with the life and work of St. Benedict.

This new activity soon produced visible results. About 650 the earliest bands of pilgrims raised their joyful hymns as they passed within the gates of Rome —forerunners of the immense crowds which flocked to the Jubilees of later times. In 689 the Saxon King Cadwalla crossed the Channel and came to Rome for his baptism; and a few years later two other Saxon kings doffed their crowns in St. Peter's and assumed the monastic cowl. The Romans drove a brisk trade in relics with their visitors, and made provision for their entertainment. The Saxon burgh, or Borgo, sprang up under the shadow of St. Peter's.[2] The city

[1] The observance of All Saints' day with which the Church is specially associated dates from two centuries later.

[2] The first English institution in the Borgo was founded by King Ine in 727; it was not till late in the following century that King Offa established the home for pilgrims which later became the hospital of S. Spirito.

grew prosperous through the new traffic, which increased with the rapid conversion of Germany, so that Gregory II (715–31) was not only able to repair its walls, but to face the risks of a breach with Constantinople.

In the hope of converting Islam to Christianity, the Emperor Leo the Isaurian had ordered the destruction of images in churches (726). Under the Pope's leadership, Italy, already familiar with the expression of faith and dogma in pictures, revolted against the decree, and a vigorous argument ensued. Gregory II was a Roman, and stated his case with Roman spirit. If the Emperor came into an Italian school, he wrote, and told the children to destroy the figures of saints, they would throw their slates at his head. Nevertheless, the Pope carefully refrained from any formal act of rebellion. He was far from repudiating his allegiance, and still farther from passing sentence of excommunication. He based himself on the distinction, of immense importance to later history, which he drew between spiritual and temporal authority, and from these premises argued that Leo had gone beyond his legitimate functions. Leo dismissed the whole contention. He was sovereign, he wrote, and therefore a priest.

The controversy might have been prolonged indefinitely had not events in Italy forced the Popes to further action. A strong hand was required to keep the Lombards in order, and the Byzantine Government was weak. Fortunately for the papacy the invaders did not remain united, but established separate dukedoms throughout the country, and when their power threatened to coalesce under Liutprand into a new monarchy on Gothic lines, Gregory II had no difficulty in convincing the Lombard chief, a Christian with all the ardour of a recent convert, that he must refrain from any action which threatened the independence of the Church (729). Ten years later, however, when

the Lombard union had fallen to pieces and Rome was harassed by irresponsible raiders, the Pope, in his necessity, addressed a first appeal for aid to the rising and pious Frankish power across the Alps. It is noteworthy that Rome no longer represented herself as part of the Empire. She was a Holy State (*Sancta respublica*), and her people belonged to St. Peter. The crisis came in 751. In that year the Lombards took Ravenna, the seat of the Byzantine Government, and in that year Pipin, the Mayor of the Palace of the now useless Merovingian kings, resolved to assume in name the royal power which he had long exercised in fact. In appealing to the Pope, Pipin did not even entertain the notion, afterwards so prominent, that Rome had power to award earthly thrones. A Frankish king could only be elected by the Frankish people. The point was that Pipin was not free to submit himself for election, being bound by his oath of loyalty to the reigning Merovingian. But an oath taken in God's name could be annulled by God's vicegerent upon earth. Pipin appealed to the Pope for release, and the Pope readily accepted the position of supreme arbiter in a moral question.

Events now moved rapidly. Early in 754 Pope Stephen II entered France, journeyed to Paris, and, without any reference to the Emperor whose exarch he was in effect superseding, appointed Pipin patricius. The Frankish king accepted the office, crossed the Alps, and extorted from the Lombards a promise to surrender Ravenna to the Pope. No sooner had he left Italy than the enemy broke faith, and even besieged Rome. Stephen met the emergency by sending an urgent letter to the King. It was written not in his own name, but in St. Peter's, and the Apostle threatened to excommunicate a patricius who paltered with his duty.

These developments are most significant, though

their significance has often been misrepresented by historians. The criticism which lays stress on the growing worldliness of the papacy, as shown by its desire to grab the territory of the exarchate, is entirely off the mark. The eighth century was a time of transition and crumbling authority throughout Italy. Only one token of power was sure of acknowledgment in those barbarous times—the actual ownership of land. From this alone, or rather from the control which it involved over the military service of its inhabitants, could material power be derived, and material power was the only weapon for dealing with raiding Lombards who knew nothing and cared less about moral authority and who respected a patricius on the other side of the Alps as little as an emperor at the other end of the Mediterranean. Stephen II was a practical man, and the means by which he dealt with his problem were systematized later into the feudalism whereby some sort of rough order was imposed upon a changing and turbulent society.

Nor did the Pope enter his claim on his own exclusive authority. He had previously consulted the Roman people, who approved of his plan, and their representatives accompanied him to France. Thus if in one aspect the Pope appears as a feudal noble, in another he is the typical despot of a mediaeval town. But both aspects are partial. In the last analysis the Pope, with his people, asserts a theocratic right, and this is a notable step in advance. Gregory II, indeed, in his controversy with Leo the Isaurian, had upheld his spiritual authority as independent of the Emperor's temporal power. But Stephen went much farther. He now claimed, in defiance of the facts, that the exarch had been the Pope's viceroy and not the Emperor's, and that with the collapse of his authority the exarchate reverted to its original Roman owners.

The claim sprang, as has been seen, from the sheer necessity imposed on Rome of controlling territory if she was to maintain herself at all in the robber-infested Italy of 750. But it was nominally based upon documentary evidence. There was written down about this time a "Donation of Constantine," wherein the Emperor was made to declare that, having become a Christian, he proposed to transfer his capital elsewhere so as not to encroach upon papal authority, and on his departure was handing over not merely Rome but all Italy into the possession of the Pope. After centuries of uncritical acceptance the forgery was definitely exposed in the Renaissance, and Protestantism found it an effective weapon in the controversies of the following epoch. It is perhaps impossible for a modern historian, trained as he is to distinguish between facts as stated by contemporary observers, and facts as interpreted by later critics, to enter into the mind of the eighth-century cleric by whom this fundamental distinction was so startingly obliterated. But some hint of the mental process at work can be gathered from the more readily intelligible episode of half a century later, when the Empire—a new creation if ever there was one—was universally represented as having passed in unbroken succession from Augustus to Charlemagne. After centuries of upheaval the world was desperately anxious to settle down, and was searching for a basis of settlement. It wanted an authority round which it could rally, but such authority must needs be legally constituted. During the previous centuries there had been too many illegal authorities which had tyrannized their way into acceptance and had collapsed for want of any true root. The modern world, which is in somewhat similar case, looks to the future and submits as a sanction for principles a vision of the good time that will come as a result of their

adoption. The mediaeval world, on the contrary, found its golden age in the past. It had prospered under the Empire, whose memory was still cherished; if it was to prosper again it could only be under that same Empire. Charlemagne's power, therefore, must be Imperial in the old sense of the word, or it was fraudulent; and the very intensity with which this was felt was taken as proof that Charlemagne was, in very truth, Imperator and Augustus. To our modern pragmatical minds Charlemagne's Empire is its own justification; it is enough that it fitted the needs of the time. But to the mediaeval man facts were only symbols; what mattered, what explained them and gave them meaning, was the underlying theory; and the theory, thus felt to be essential, was, of course, forthcoming. Irreverent persons have been known to suggest that modern science proceeds on similar lines.

It was in this temper that the needs of the eighth-century papacy were dealt with by the author of the "Donation of Constantine." He did not sit down to make a deliberate fake. His object was to explain the facts. The facts were that the papacy needed territory to maintain itself against the Lombards. Therefore it had a right to such territory. But, by common consent, all right originated in or through the Roman Empire, and obviously the Emperor who would naturally have conferred this right was Constantine. The explanation went beyond the immediate need—a further proof of its truth; for it showed how the papal position derived from the Empire but was independent of it, and how the Pope was thus enabled himself to rule territory and to bestow a title. In deference to the thought of the age the explanation was put forward in the guise of historical fact, the only form of statement which was then regarded as explaining anything; and, once put forward, was

accepted the more readily because of the stream of true donations for which the false donation quickly supplied a precedent. Moreover, the eighth century was not more incredulous than the twentieth, and people then believed what was written on parchment as they now believe what is printed in newspapers. And this is perhaps as near as we can hope to get to the understanding of a very curious chapter in the history of European thought.

To round off the story, it remains to trace the steps by which the patricius was transformed into the Emperor. The real breach with the Eastern Empire was made in 754, when the Pope bestowed a title hitherto conferred by the Emperor; but as the title implied a theoretical allegiance to Constantinople, the effect of the change was not apparent. Nor was the Pope at first aware that he had subjected himself to a new master. On Stephen's death his successor, Paul I, was consecrated at once. Frankish ratification was not requested, nor did Pipin suggest that it was required. But conditions changed when Charlemagne crossed the Alps, made conquests in Italy, and was styled King of the Lombards as well as of the Franks. In 774 he visited Rome and, assuming the title of Defender of the Church, acquired jurisdiction in the city. Its extent was matter of dispute with Pope Adrian I, who was by no means prepared to admit his patricius as co-regent. Perhaps the reason for his acceptance of an authority which, as he knew, would always tend to clash with his own is to be sought in the curious legal conditions of the time. As a result of the want of permanent constitutional authorities, men had acquired the habit of taking about with them the law under which they were born. A Frank lived and was judged by Frank law, a Lombard by Lombard law, a Roman by Roman law, and a cleric by canon law.

Rome was now the resort of foreigners, of whose law the Pope was ignorant, and in claiming judicial powers in Rome the King of the Franks and Lombards was only protecting the interests of his subjects.

Whatever the position was, and possibly it was never regularized, it could easily endure so long as there was no change in the tenure of the sacred chair. But Pope Adrian's days were prolonged, and his successor, face to face with the mightiest sovereign Europe had known for centuries, was compelled to give further definition to Charlemagne's status. The new Pope, Leo III, was fully aware that though his episcopal immunity was the legal basis of the fresh treaty which his election had made necessary, his actual authority in Rome might shrivel when confronted with such overwhelming greatness. He found means, however, to maintain himself with effective dignity. It happened that Caliph Haroun al Raschid had already sent the banner of Jerusalem and the keys of Christ's grave to the monarch whom he regarded as protector of the Christians. With admirable tact Leo III similarly despatched the banner of Rome and the keys of St. Peter's grave to the defender of the Church, who, for his part, must have been aware that the shrine above the grave contained the deeds of gift made by himself, by Pipin, and, as was believed, by Constantine.

About the same time Leo further explained his position by erecting in the Lateran the famous mosaic, a copy of which still stands on the site. Flanking the central subject of the Saviour and His disciples are two pictures. On the left, Christ hands the keys to Peter and the banner to Constantine. On the right, St. Peter delivers the papal stole to Leo and the banner to Charlemagne, not yet Emperor, for the lettering styles him Rex. The ultimate dependence of the

King on the Pope is tactfully but clearly indicated; for Charlemagne derives his authority not, like Constantine,[1] from Christ, but from St. Peter,[2] and the Pope is represented as St. Peter's successor.

But events did not permit Leo to enjoy the fruits of his ingenuity. There was a revolt in Rome. Escaping from prison, the Pope fled to the King in Germany, and the rebel leaders sent their representatives to lay their case before his sovereign tribunal. Charles now approached the city to do justice between the disputants, one of whom was the Vicar of Christ. As he drew near, he must have already been planning to assume a title worthy of his august judicial position. Leo III, however, did not allow himself to be overawed. The leaders of the revolt were judged and were held not to have made good their charges. But the Pope did not deign to clear himself before any earthly judge. Standing at the altar, his hand upon the Gospels, he took oath of his innocence before God. It was a happy device; a happier followed. Charles still hesitated to assume the Imperial title. Probably, as Bryce suggests, he was contemplating further negotiations with Constantinople, then in the throes of a dynastic crisis. He was aware of the fact, which our habit of referring to the Eastern and Western Empires rather obscures, that the Empire had never yet been divided. In theory there had been but one Empire whose halves were ruled by co-Emperors. But where man hesitated God might act through his vicegerent. On Christmas Day 799, as Charlemagne rose from prayer at the shrine, the Pope set a gold circlet on his head amid the acclama-

[1] Constantine's power was made to derive from God in order to give the fullest validity to his donation.

[2] The same point is subtly made in the fragment of mosaic from the tomb of Emperor Otto II now in the crypt of St. Peter's. As a rule, St. Peter holds the two keys of the spiritual power to bind and loose. In this mosaic he holds three keys by way of showing that the Emperor's temporal power also derived from him.

tions of the assembled Franks and Romans, who had evidently been advised of what was toward.

Thus was created that vision of universal empire which dazzled the eyes of European monarchs for centuries and so greatly hampered the evolution of the continent into a system of national states. In truth, it was an attempt to set back the hands of the clock, for Europe was no longer one, and the common faith which, as Constantine perceived, might amalgamate invading tribes could not overcome the discordant impulses of young nations. Yet the ceremony did no more than formalize the situation whose transient character was unhappily not perceived. Charlemagne's unique position had already been recognized by Romans, Franks, and Pope in their several ways, and it was by an act of symbolism, such as the temper of the age demanded, that the blessing of God was added to Frankish election and Roman imperium on that memorable Christmas Day in the central shrine of Christendom, when the Pope set the diadem on the monarch's head and the cathedral rang with the shouts of the notables of both peoples hailing their new Augustus.

It may be that some thoughtful historically minded spectator of the scene put himself the question whether the restoration of the Empire would again make Rome the capital of the world. There had recently taken place significant changes in the city's aspect, which hinted that the Frankish power might consolidate itself on the Tiber. When Charlemagne first visited Rome in 774 he found the place looking much as it had looked two centuries earlier, save for increasing dilapidation and decay. The impulse to make a new Christian Rome out of the old pagan materials had almost worn itself out before Theodoric checked random plundering, and Byzantine rule had not been favourable to architectural enterprise. Moreover, Christian art

was becoming increasingly decorative. So far back as Leo the Great's time churches had begun to be made splendid with new mosaic, although the structural damage done by the Vandals was offensively conspicuous. But the age had lost all spirit for great works, and for centuries there had been no building except at the Lateran, whereas ornament was lavishly applied to all the great churches.

In the ninth century, however, there was a change. Not only did Pope Adrian revive the old engineering tradition by his repairs to the walls and aqueducts, but the northern device of the campanile began to be adopted in Rome. The first of these towers were erected by Stephen II, and may have been suggested to him by his visit to France. It adjoined St. Peter's, and was demolished with the rest of the old cathedral. Two other towers had been put up since Charlemagne first set eyes on Rome, one by Adrian at S. Maria in Cosmedin, the other by Leo III at S. Francesca Romana.[1] These definite breaches with classical precedent were assuredly Frankish symbols, and Rome, interpreting them as such, may have expected a great outburst of northern building to follow the coronation. But Charlemagne himself was aware of the difference, so vital to Rome, between the restored Empire and its prototype, and his choice of Aachen as his capital had already shown that he had no thought of establishing himself in Italy. Centred as it was on the Rhine, the Frankish Empire could not be governed from the farther side of the Alps. But the Emperor did not on that account place Rome on a level with the other provincial cities under his sway. In 842, when his Empire was definitely partitioned, Rome and Aachen

[1] The design of the present tower of S. Francesca Romana is certainly later than the ninth century, but, allowance being made for restorations, the present tower of S. Maria in Cosmedin may incorporate Pope Adrian's work.

were treated as its joint capitals, both of which had to be included in the realm assigned to the bearer of the Imperial title. There was thus created a belt of territory, stretching across the continent, which was neither French nor German, but was incapable of assuming a definite nationality of its own—an arrangement prolific in European troubles until our own day. But at the time of his coronation Charlemagne had not begun to contemplate the partition of his Empire, and his attitude towards Rome was that as the greatest monarch in Christendom he was bound to protect and maintain it in the interests of all Christians. In this spirit he bade its people accept the Pope as their sovereign, and the authority which he continued to exercise within its walls was of a general supervising character. In any case the presence of a couple of imperial *missi* meant something very different from the close bureaucratic control which had existed in the Rome of the Caesars and still flourished in Constantinople. Later, indeed, Charles made one of his sons King of Italy; but the title was meaningless while the Emperor lived, and the son died first, leaving an heir who was still a boy when Charlemagne's own death inaugurated the gloomiest and most hopeless period in European history.

Nevertheless, the world did not relapse straight back into the barbarism out of which the Emperor had lifted it. On the contrary, the new forces which he had gathered up and fostered were now strong enough to assert themselves, though slowly and painfully enough. To begin with, Rome herself had attained to a new and proud consciousness of her position as the centre of Christendom. As such she successfully resisted all attempts to found a Kingdom of Italy. For such a kingdom would make Rome serve as its capital, and the Pope and his people were at one in

holding that their city would be degraded if it became the seat of a local court. The world was behind them in their opposition. Rome was the goal of the pilgrimages whereby the repentant wrongdoers of that lawless epoch made atonement for their sins. Rome, too, was the storehouse of those priceless treasures for which other communities bribed and fought and thieved—the relics of martyrs. The wheel had come full circle. Time had been when the Romans had brought foreign gods to their city; now the bones of her saints were exported all over Christendom. They carried Rome's fame with them. It is not an accident that when the savage Bulgars first embraced Christianity about half-way through the ninth century they appealed to Rome for guidance, though they were soon drawn willy-nilly within the orbit of Constantinople.

Rome, in fact, was the world's jewel; but to whom did Rome itself belong—to the Pope, to the Romans, or to the Emperor? Charlemagne's career left the question unanswered, for the sources of his authority were complex. His own people had elected him King, the Romans had clothed him with their imperium, and the Pope had crowned him Emperor. The problem only became acute when his power broke up into its constituent atoms after his death. On the face of it the Romans had a strong case. The right of papal election was admittedly theirs, and though Charles had exercised and his successors claimed a right of ratification, it was only recognized under compulsion, and was violated whenever circumstances allowed. But if, as the Romans maintained, the Pope was their nominee, it was intolerable that he should rule as their tyrant. The Popes countered with the unanswerable retort that when canonically elected they were the successors of St. Peter, and as such were not amenable to any earthly authority.

This clash of doctrines accounts for the constant revolts which fill Roman history for the next four centuries. The local difficulty was the Emperor's opportunity, for behind his fiat lay a material power which neither the Pope nor people could afford to disregard. But in the ninth century the Emperor was generally carrying on a losing battle against sons and brothers; and even when his hands were free his position was by no means easy. He spoke with authority when the papal chair was vacant, and his word was omnipotent when he was actually in Rome. But these were rare moments, and at ordinary times he could not master a people who defied him the moment his back was turned, or a Pope whose hand alone bestowed the crown which made him Emperor. There arose a vicious triangle—Emperor, Pope, and citizens, all indispensable to one another, and all filled with mutual distrust. In 824 the Emperor Lothar had momentarily revived Frankish authority, but half-way through the century it seemed as though power were again concentrating itself in the Pope's hands. The Saracens carried their raids into Latium, and with the Emperor remote and impotent, and the Ravenna exarchate reduced to the shadow of a name, the citizens could look only to their Pope for their defence. It had been almost the same with the Lombards two centuries earlier, and was to be almost the same with the Normans a century later. This time the peril was most urgent. In 846 the Saracens sailed up the Tiber and sacked the city, looting St. Peter's, which Christian invaders had spared. Scarcely had they departed when the Pope died. His successor, Leo IV, was elected and consecrated at once; the emergency forbade reference to distant Aachen. The new Pope, rising to the occasion, headed a naval league, which temporarily cleared the seas and gave the city a breathing space. Leo took

advantage of it to fortify the Vatican quarter, and though his walls are now for the most part rebuilt or destroyed, the name Leonine City preserves the memory of his work.

Thus provided with a citadel, the Popes might in time have made their monarchy effective, had not attacks from without compelled them to feudalize their state. Constant raids demanded local defence, and local defence was only possible under local leaders. But the leaders refused to protect territory in which they had no permanent interest, and the Popes gave way. Hereditary fiefs were established, whose holders consolidated their positions in repelling the continual raids of Greek, Frank, Lombard, Saracen, and Hungarian bands. As the miserable ninth century drew to its anarchic close, the shadowy Emperors ceased to come to Rome to receive their meaningless crowns, and the Pope himself, by whose hand the supreme title was bestowed, was oppressed by his nominal vassals, and at last became their creature. The prestige of the papacy had shrunk with its dwindling power. After the horrors of the corpse synod whereat the body of a Pope had been taken from its grave, clad in pontifical vestments, tried, condemned, and flung into the Tiber the papacy could only profit by a temporary eclipse.

CHAPTER V

POPE AND EMPEROR

Revival of the Empire—Papal claims—Disputes over election—A feudal interlude—Reform of the Church—The Hildebrandine movement—Enter the Normans—Canossa—The Emperor's revenge—Sack of Rome—Condition of the city—The Pope's position—Arnold of Brescia—An English Pope—Barbarossa—The papacy at its height—Frederick II—Real nature of the quarrel—A Pyrrhic victory—Charles of Anjou, adventurer and King—End of the mediaeval papacy—Boniface VIII and France—Avignon—Dante and the papacy—The arts in Rome—Aspect of the city—Cola di Rienzo—The return from captivity—Outbreak of the Schism—Council of Constance.

A GROUP of strange mediaeval figures now comes forward on the Roman stage—the Senator Theophylact, his wife the Senatress Theodora, their daughter Marozia, this last the villain of the piece. First Marozia deposed and probably murdered Pope John X, a strong man who had sought to restore the authority of his office, and caused her own son John to be made Pope in his place. Next another son, Alberic, drove her from Rome, imprisoned the puppet Pope and, having induced the nominally sovereign people to transfer authority to himself, ruled (932) with the title of Princeps and Senator of all the Romans. Alberic, whom the Colonna claim as their ancestor, was a remarkable man under whose firm control Rome enjoyed peace for twenty-two years. Born fifteen hundred years after his proper time, Alberic was one of the local tyrants who abound in Greek history of the sixth century B.C., and, like

his prototypes, strengthened himself against the nobles by organizing the city militia. It is this fact which gives him his place in history. Rome was never a great commercial or industrial city, and thus, unlike Venice, Genoa, and Florence, possessed no strong and ambitious middle class. But under Alberic the burgher element developed such strength as it possessed, and though never of great importance at least ceased henceforward to be negligible.

As he lay on his death-bed Alberic was concerned for the future. His son, Octavian, a lad of sixteen, was too weak to succeed him as sovereign-senator. But it occurred to the dying tyrant that the boy might rule if clothed with ecclesiastical authority. He therefore caused his son to be elected Pope, and Octavian ascended the sacred chair under the style of John XII, being the first Pope to change his name on his accession. But the scheme failed. No sooner was Alberic dead than Rome revolted, and John, looking about him for aid, became aware of a German sovereign pre-eminent enough to aspire to the title of Emperor.

The German sovereign was Otto I, not unjustly called the Great, who, after restoring the monarchy in his own country, had crossed the Alps, attracted by the chances of conquest in Lombardy which were opened to him by the appeals of its exiles and the rivalries of its princely houses. John offered to crown him Emperor if restored by his sword, and a bargain was struck on these terms. To Otto, as to his son and grandson after him, the Imperial title appeared of immense importance. It was his policy to raise himself definitely above the great feudal nobles of Germany, his dangerously strong vassals to-day, his possible successors to-morrow. He was accordingly at pains to exhibit the authority bestowed on him in Rome, God's gift by the Pope's hand, as something

which specially exalted its possessor, being different in kind from any other authority on earth. With him, therefore, the Empire became the Holy Roman Empire, and from his epoch dates the famous Leonine hexameter "*Roma caput mundi regit orbis frena rotundi.*" [1]

Through its establishment of a tradition which fascinated German rulers for centuries, the Empire of the Ottos is of some importance in history. But so far as Rome was concerned, it was a mere transient episode, over and done with in half a century, and significant only as inaugurating the grim custom of a coronation battle and as showing—though the lesson was not learnt—that already Rome was stronger than the Emperor. To the papacy, on the other hand, the revived Empire ultimately brought an immense accession of power. The situation had surprising possibilities. John XII was a rascal and Otto I a great prince; yet Otto rightly perceived that John could clothe him with unique prestige. In fact, whatever moral principle had remained in the world during the previous century and a half of confusion had been represented by the Pope; and when, early in the tenth century, papal authority had itself perished in the welter, there was nothing to take its place.

The world felt the void, but was ignorant of its cause. How were German peasants and English burghers to get tidings of Alberic's *coup d'état*? But whenever a strong Pope emerged, his voice was heard throughout Europe, and it happened that one of the strongest of the Popes had worn the tiara during the last agony of the Carolingian Empire. Nicholas I (858–67) had stood boldly for the right in his dispute with the miserable princeling who had inherited the name and

[1] It is still unforgotten. The fat, garrulous *custode* who conducts visitors over S. Angelo is in the habit of rounding off his periods with the remark *Roma capus mundus.*

title of Charles the Great. The quarrel attracted notice in a world which had grown indifferent to political bickerings because it centred round a moral issue. The Emperor's brother wished to put away his wife and marry his mistress. The Pope forbade the sin, and carried his point against the Emperor and the German bishops. But the challenge to his authority led him him to define its character. Arguing from the pseudo-Isidorian decretals, he maintained that while a Pope was exalted above all other bishops, a king ranked below them. In an age of contemptible kings, the doctrine penetrated the public mind, and the story that Nicholas I added the first crown to the papal tiara, though dismissed by modern scholars as based on a misprint, is at least eloquent of the Pope's reputation in a later age. His claim was noted by clerics all over Europe, and helped to promote the militant Benedictism of Cluny during the tenth century. But its full consequences could not become visible until the papal throne was occupied by men of very different calibre from John XII.

So soon as the crowned Emperor had left, John threw off the restriction imposed on his authority. The conscientious Otto returned and summoned a synod which deposed the Pope.[1] The Romans were made to promise not to elect a Pope without the Emperor's previous consent—a restriction going far beyond the old Imperial claim to ratification—but refused obedience to the Pope elected under those conditions. They set up a free Pope on John's death, and Otto twice returned to Rome to restore the authority of his nominee. For the moment the Emperor had his way, but at the price, too high for most German

[1] John, who did not appear, answered his accusers in a short and angry scrawl whose Latin trembled on the verge of Italian; and the synod found his Latinity as shocking as his conduct.

kings to pay, of three visits to Rome in as many years, each time with an army at his back. The struggle of parties within the city was affected by these occasional displays of Imperial violence. With them begins the rivalry between the Imperialist Ghibellines and the nationalist Guelfs which spread all over Italy and became the curse of Italian politics.

On Otto's death the Romans, reasserting themselves, deposed and murdered his Pope, and Otto II found it prudent to accept the distinguished monk who was elected in his place. On the next vacancy, ten years later, the Emperor himself hastened to Rome to enforce his will. But fortune favoured the Romans. Otto II had scarcely entered the city when death overtook him. He was the only Emperor to be buried in the cathedral where so many Emperors were crowned. His sarcophagus has now become the font, but his grave and a fragment of the mosaic [1] which once adorned it may still be seen in that extraordinary museum, the Crypt.

The dead Emperor left a son, a boy of three, whose guardians were too occupied in Germany to interfere with Roman affairs. But in 996 the youthful Otto III showed that he had inherited in double measure the Imperialist aspirations of his house. He came to Rome, where he proposed to settle permanently and establish his court on the Byzantine model. His death six years later anticipated the inevitable German revolt, and the Aventine, where he had built his palace, sank back into the tranquil solitude which it still maintains. But he left his memorial in Rome—the church which he built on the Tiber island and which he dedicated to St. Bartholomew because it was intended to house the body of the Apostle. It retained its name, although the Emperor was found to have been

[1] *Vide* p. 170, footnote.

fobbed off with the less precious corpse of St. Paulinus of Nola. But Otto's reign was more than a record of impossible policies and unfulfilled intentions. He asserted control of the papacy, and used it to break a tradition. During the last two and a half centuries there had been nearly fifty Popes of whom all but two were Romans; but of the two Popes elected at Otto's bidding, the first was a German and the second a Frenchman. They were the forerunners of the great cosmopolitan ecclesiastics, who exalted the papacy to its utmost height. But the immediate future offered no promise of these glories. On Otto's death the papacy relapsed into the trough in which it had been sunk a century before. Along with the lordship of Rome it became an hereditary possession of the Counts of Tusculum.

But history never repeats itself in identical terms. Alberic was a city tyrant; the lords of Tusculum were feudal nobles. The dependence of the papacy on the former was an episode in its constant local struggle with the Romans, but its subjection to the latter inaugurated a conflict on a far grander scale wherein it challenged the principle which underlay the political institutions of all Europe. It is this conflict which makes the close of the Middle Ages as confused as their beginning. The eleventh century is the watershed of the period. Hitherto Europe had been kept in a ferment by the continual inroads of migratory peoples seeking new homes within the broken frontiers of the Roman Empire. But the flood was now beginning to dry up. In the eleventh century the coming of the Normans completed the tale of the new elements, and Europe, finding that after all the world had not ended in the year 1000, picked up heart and prepared to settle down.

Feudalism was the system which appeared to suit

the conditions of the time, and had feudalism been left to do its work it might have succeeded in consolidating Europe according to its notions. In fact, however, it was only in Germany that it was able to establish its network of principalities. Everywhere else it was obstructed by local circumstances. In England the insular prejudice of the natives was stubbornly opposed to the new-fangled foreign device; in France it broke against the tradition of a unified Government established by the Romans and revived by Charlemagne; in Italy it had to contend against the still more powerful democratic tradition of communal life which now began to reassert itself in Pisa and Genoa and Venice, and with which the feudal hierarchy was obviously incompatible; while in Austria, Hungary, Poland, and Spain the necessities of defence against pagan and infidel attack concentrated power in the hands of the King. Feudalism was thus beset by practical difficulties on every hand, when it was suddenly challenged in its principles by the marvellously regenerated papacy.

Within the Church the forces of reform had long been gathering strength. As early as the beginning of the tenth century Benedictinism had begun to develop new energies, and a hundred years later all Europe was astir with the impulses generated at Cluny. The evils of the Church were patent. Priests who lived in open concubinage had forfeited all claim to personal regard, nor could reverence for their office be expected of an age which witnessed an unblushing simoniacal traffic for preferment. To enforce celibacy and to suppress simony were therefore the two main aims of the Cluniac movement, and both were substantially achieved during the third quarter of the eleventh century. But during the second quarter the scandals grew, and were most hideous in the

highest place. From 1033 to 1048 the papal office was desecrated by the profligate blackguard, Benedict IX. The depths were reached in 1046, when the ruffian put up his papacy to auction, and the world was shocked at the news that there were three Popes in Rome, one in the Lateran, one in St. Peter's, and one in S. Maria Maggiore.

The age regarded the scandal as a punishment for its sins, and characteristically sought to express its repentance by some visible symbol of atonement. There thus came to be witnessed the strange phenomenon of the flagellants. Bands of men whose numbers increased at every stage moved in procession from city to city, scourging themselves as they marched, and measuring the purification of their souls by the number of blows inflicted on their tortured flesh. The manifestation occurred at two other crises in the history of the mediaeval Church, in the later thirteenth century, when criticism was attacking the theory of papal supremacy, and in 1400 when Christendom was horrified by the great schism.

Both the times and the Church were thus ripe for reform when Henry III, the vigorous and God-fearing German King, descended on Rome in 1046 to make good his claim to the Imperial crown and to right a state of affairs intolerable to opinion. It seemed easy to predict the course of events. The papacy, freed from the self-seeking grip of a feudal princeling and placed under the devoted protection of a strong Emperor, would of itself become the instrument of the expected reforms. That this prediction was completely falsified, and that the Church directed the force of her reforming zeal against the very power which first it gave scope, was the exclusive work of a very great man—the monk Hildebrand, who became Pope Gregory VII. He had first come to Rome when things were at their

worst, and from his study of them had drawn a conclusion to which he clung with all his iron tenacity of will. The Popes, he argued, could not fulfil their mission because they were not free. But neither could they fulfil it when free, if they owed their freedom to some strong external hand. They must be free by right. It was therefore not enough to suppress their present gaolers. They must attack the evil at its root, and must set themselves beyond the range of the whole feudal system which made their captivity possible, even if the task involved the subjugation of the centre of it all, the Emperor himself. Anything short of this would make reforms precarious, and therefore worthless. From this conception nothing could ever induce Pope Gregory to waver, not the collapse of his rule, nor the destruction of his city, nor the certain prospect of death in exile.

The symbol of the controversy was the word "patricius." By a tradition dating from the later Roman Empire, maintained by Theodoric and revived by Pipin, the title was borne by the foreigner who was master of Rome. As such it was adopted by the Counts of Tusculum, whose position it exactly suited, and who had most emphatically asserted the long and fiercely disputed right of its holders to nominate Popes. When Henry III came to Rome and put the Counts of Tusculum back into their proper insignificance, he decided to clothe himself with all their powers. The Roman people, in their eagerness for a settlement, made no difficulty about the surrender of their own electoral rights, thus establishing a precedent of which Hildebrand was soon to make use. But his time was not yet come, and he could only remain passive when Henry caused himself to be crowned not only Emperor but patricius as well. He first revealed his attitude three years later, when he came to Rome in

the train of the able German bishop whom Henry had nominated Pope. At Hildebrand's instigation Leo IX entered Rome in the garb of a pilgrim, and did not assume the papal vestments until he had been canonically elected by the Roman people.

The work of reform was at once begun, but political events caused an interruption. A band of Normans sought to establish themselves in Southern Italy, and the Pope not only headed the local resistance but himself accompanied the army which Italy collected to oppose the invaders (1053). In the ensuing battle the Normans gained a complete victory, and Leo himself fell a prisoner into the conquerors' hands. There followed one of the surprises in which papal history is so rich. The Norman chiefs flung themselves at the Pope's feet, entreated his mercy, and begged to be allowed to hold as his feudatories lands which were already theirs by the right of their good swords. The Pope gladly acquiesced, and thus brought about a situation of which Hildebrand did not miss the meaning. If the Pope defied the Emperor, and the Emperor marched on Rome at the head of an army, with what force could the Pope oppose him? The Normans supplied a first answer to this hitherto hopeless question. The best fighters in Italy could be trusted to support the Pope from whom they held their lands in fee, against an Emperor who, if victorious, would certainly substitute other feoffees of his own. A second answer was soon forthcoming. The Countess Matilda of Tuscany, a lady of great possessions, cherished an unfaltering devotion to the Church, and was as ready as any man to refuse obedience to her feudal overlord. It thus came about that in the critical hour Hildebrand was able to fight feudalism with the combined aid of its own traditional besetting weakness and of the new

element in Italy which had not been incorporated into the orthodox system.

In 1056 the death of Henry III hastened the movement of events. The heir was a minor, the Empire consequently powerless, and when the sacred chair became vacant in the following year the Romans elected their own Pope. Two years later Hildebrand took action calculated to secure a succession of worthy Popes by transferring the elections to the college of cardinals, now composed of reformers. The Roman clergy and people were permitted to acquiesce, and the rights of the Empire were ambiguously safeguarded. But the move produced a schism. In 1061 a Pope was elected by the cardinals, and an anti-Pope was nominated from Germany. A paradoxical situation developed, for, while the nobles of Rome rose in revolt and supported the anti-Pope, Hildebrand promoted changes in the German Regency Council which caused him to be disavowed by his makers. The real strength of the Hildebrandine position now became manifest. The Normans, though their rising ambition made them rather uncertain allies, sufficed to restore quiet in Rome after a year of civil war, during which the anti-Pope, who had entrenched himself in S. Angelo, failed to bribe his way into the city—a tribute to the progress of the reforming movement. A term of uneasy truce followed, which lasted till 1073, when Hildebrand was himself elected Pope by acclamation. The young Emperor was too weak to refuse to ratify a choice which assuredly boded him no good, but so unstable was the Pope's power in Rome and its neighbourhood that more than a year elapsed before he developed his policy.

At last, in February 1075, he struck his blow for complete ecclesiastical independence by prohibiting the lay investiture of bishops. His philosophy carried

him even beyond this bold act. The kings of Christendom, he laid it down, owed their thrones to acts of conquest, and their rule thus lacked legitimate authority such as could only derive from Christ the Lord of all. Gregory therefore called upon them to admit themselves to be vassals of himself, Christ's representative on earth. The demand grated unpleasantly upon the ears of Normans in the full flush of their success. The Duke, who had lately made himself King of England, returned a blunt refusal. More serious because it was heard at closer quarters was the evasive language used by another great Norman, Robert Guiscard, who proposed eventually to barter his allegiance for the papal ratification of conquests which he had not yet had time to effect. At Christmas the ground opened under Gregory's feet. The nobles revolted and, led by the Prefect of Rome, broke into S. Maria Maggiore where the Pope was celebrating Mass and carried him off a wounded prisoner. The rebels were prepared to make terms, but their indomitable captive refused to negotiate, and after a few days the people took courage and secured the release of their Pope, who returned to Church and imperturbably finished his interrupted Mass.

A greater triumph awaited him. Henry IV had met the prohibition of lay investiture and the papal invitation to repent of his misdeeds by summoning a council which declared Gregory deposed. The Pope countered with a tremendous exaltation of the supremacy of his office. He issued his formidable anathema deposing the King and releasing his subjects from their allegiance. Political as well as religious motives caused Germany to rally to his support. A Diet gave the King a year to make his peace with the Pope under pain of forfeiting his crown. Henry had no choice but to give way. In the depth of winter he crossed the Alps to make

personal act of contrition. He found the terrible Pope at Canossa, a fortress belonging to the Countess Matilda. For three days he stood in the snow awaiting the Pope's pleasure, until at last, at Matilda's plea, the gates were opened and Gregory received his penitent and gave him absolution (1077). To the end of its history—and it had still upwards of three centuries to run—the Empire never quite threw off the shame of those three days. The episode became proverbial in the tongues of Europe, particularly in German, and a journey to Canossa is still the metaphor which describes the endurance of supreme, public humiliation.

Nevertheless, the immediate consequences were transient. The situation did not truly correspond to facts, for the Empire was not yet an entirely negligible thing, and its power was bound to be vindicated if Henry succeeded in restoring his authority in Germany where it had been challenged, though without the Pope's sanction, by the election of an anti-King. Gregory himself assisted to redress the balance by committing a fatal blunder in policy. By 1080 Robert Guiscard had rounded off his conquests and took his oath of vassalage in return for the recognition of his kingdom, which finally extinguished the Lombard State. Thus, strengthened in Italy and misinformed as to the situation in Germany, Gregory recognized the anti-King.

The step was reasonably regarded by Henry as an act of war. Having defeated and slain his rival, he marched straight on Rome to extort his coronation as Emperor. In his train he brought an anti-Pope who would crown him if the lawful Pope proved obstinate. The precaution showed that Henry knew his man. Nor did the Romans fail in their loyalty to a Pope who had exalted their city above all the capitals of the earth. The first attack miscarried, and the hot weather eventually compelled Henry to raise the

siege to which he had settled down. But he returned the following year to meet with better fortune. He captured the Leonine city, only to find that the Pope had shut himself up in the impregnable fortress of S. Angelo, taking with him the Imperial crown which he was resolute as ever in refusing to surrender, much less to bestow. The deadlock dragged on. For three whole years the Romans defied their enemy across the river. Exhausted at last, they consented to do the King's bidding, and in virtue of their sovereign authority declared the Pope deposed. Still unbeaten and indomitable as ever, Gregory called on Guiscard. The Norman, aware of his own danger in the event of Henry's final triumph and attracted by the prospect of rich plunder, heard the call, and came to take a pitiless vengeance on the city which had betrayed its sovereign. From his eyrie in S. Angelo, Gregory was forced to look down on the destruction of Rome. His avengers burnt the houses of the now crowded Campus Martius, devastated the whole Lateran quarter as far as the Colosseum, completed the ruin of the Forum, and wrecked the many-storied colonnade with which Septimius Severus had crowned the Palatine. This annihilating frenzy only made the Pope's own position the more hopeless, for when once the Normans had gone, it would be impossible for him to remain in the city of whose sack he was himself the cause. Beaten at last, he sought refuge in Monte Cassino. The end came two years later (1085). "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile," were his last bitter words.

For the next ten years the papacy had no true history. The tiara was thrust upon reluctant wearers powerless to cope with a burden too great even for Gregory VII. Meanwhile the world was moving faster than it had moved for centuries. The enthusiasm which had

already purified the Church demanded more general expression. The aspirations of the time suddenly centred themselves upon the most notable of all mediaeval symbols—the veritable grave of the Redeemer. In 1095 Pope Urban II preached the crusade at Clermont and brought the papacy back to its place at the head of Christendom; the tumultuous energies of the age hurled themselves eastwards in a supreme act of repentance, and four years later Jerusalem was again in Christian hands. The attention of Europe was diverted from the controversy on which it had been focused, and for over a generation the Empire sank into the background of history. In 1111, indeed, five years after the stormy life of Henry IV had reached its miserable close, his successor extorted a recognition of lay investiture from the pacific and well-meaning Paschalis II, but in the following year a Council declared his act null and void. Finally, in 1122, the issue was buried under one of the compromises so easily applicable to disputes which have lost all vitality. It was arranged that a bishop should receive his temporal sceptre from the King and his pastoral crook from the Pope.

These were bad days for Rome. The tide of pilgrims had been diverted to the Holy Places of the East, and the ruined city was left to reconstruct itself as best it could. It was rebuilt on the lines it had begun to assume before the catastrophe. Its main avenue was the Via Pontificalis, which entered Rome opposite S. Angelo, crossed the Campus Martius, and, after winding through the remains of the ancient fora, ran past the Colosseum to the Lateran. The nobles established themselves in close proximity to the papal way and built their rough towers of ancient materials taken from the nearest rubbish-heap. The new nobility was no longer purely feudal. Money began to tell,

and the Pierleoni, a family of converted Jews, rose rapidly into prominence. The Theatre of Marcellus was their stronghold, from which they sallied to do battle with the Frangipani, established in the Colosseum. Between the two fortresses lay a "no man's land" which had once been the heart of the world. The Capitol was fitly named "Goat-hill" and the Forum "Cowfield."[1] Vergil was revealed as a true prophet. His vision of the scene a thousand years before his day had become the reality of a thousand years after it, and of all he wrote the eighth book of the Aeneid has been most deepened in meaning by the lapse of time.

The reviving life of the city was inspired by a natural hatred of the papacy, source of its misfortunes. The Popes were thus unable to direct the work of rebuilding and took little part in it, though Paschalis II restored S. Clemente and the Quattro Coronati. But even this activity was only possible because the Lateran quarter was treated as the Pope's preserve. The citizens left it severely alone, and it is only in our own day that the builders are finally lifting it out of the desolation into which Robert Guiscard plunged it. In general the Popes cannot be said to have recovered a position in Rome until half-way through the twelfth century. In the interval the full character of Gregory VII's achievement became apparent, with momentous consequences to the future of the papacy. If he had left the Bishop of Rome at hopeless variance with his see, he had also made the Pope the mightiest figure in Europe. It was a paradoxical situation. At Clermont Urban II could preach the sermon which set the world aflame. In Rome he was not even allowed to die in peace, but had to shelter himself under the protection of the Pierleoni. Paradox became triumphant when the strength of a Pope's position abroad

[1] Monte Caprino and Campo Vaccino.

was made apparent by his impotence at home. The schism of 1130 illuminated the contrast. In that year two Popes were elected in Rome at different hours of the same day. The choice of the later conclave fell on Anaclete II, a Pierleone and probably the first Jewish Pope since Peter; and it seems clear that he was the less uncanonically elected of the two. His acceptance, not only in Rome but generally throughout Italy, compelled his rival to flee the country. His flight won him the sympathetic recognition of the outside world, and it is Anaclete whom historians have agreed to describe as anti-Pope.

In Rome the clash of authorities grew more acute. In 1143 the civic militia, which had been reorganized under pressure of a war with Tivoli, joined hands with the lesser nobles to overthrow feudal rule and set up an urban republic. Under the government of fifty-six elected senators the Commune of Rome imposed its terms on the papacy, coined its own money, and set up its own courts. This was the beginning of the constitutional oligarchy which endured, though not without many vicissitudes and some interruptions, until 1870 merged Rome in Italy.

The commune soon showed that it did not regard its arrangement with the Pope as final. It invited Arnold of Brescia to Rome. Arnold was a philosopher important in history as inaugurating the reaction against the mediaeval method of thought which ultimately created the modern world. The doctrine which he taught and the argument by which he supported it were equally obnoxious to the papacy. He held that the remedy against the corruptions of the Church lay in a return to Apostolic poverty. This principle was to apply universally to all clerics, the Pope himself included. The objection had to be met that such a condition was incompatible with the position actually assumed

by the Church in the practical government of the world. Arnold met it with great boldness by criticizing the whole theory of papal supremacy. It was based on the proposition that all authority derived from Christ. In reply, Arnold invoked Roman history to prove that there was such a thing as legitimate earthly sovereignty, that it could be transmitted by due process of law, and that a study of law would determine where it now resided. It is his strong sense of historical tradition that gives Arnold his remarkable tinge of modernity. He is, in fact, the forerunner of Mazzini.

The Popes had seen to it that the advocate of these subversive principles was expelled from Lombardy. At one time, indeed, he had owed his life to the protection of powerful friends across the Alps. But his hour was now come, and he talked his heresies in Rome itself. As was always the case throughout the Middle Ages, a deadlock in Rome led to an appeal to external force. The Hohenstauffen dynasty now filled the German throne. The present head of the house was the magnificent savage, Frederick Barbarossa, who already held Germany in his strong grip. At Arnold's instigation the Roman people offered Barbarossa the Imperial title, maintaining that its grant lay within their legal right. A papal embassy followed and invited him to receive his crown, like his predecessors, from the Pope's hands. The German took note of both offers, and inferring that such a situation could hardly fail to develop to his advantage, prepared to cross the Alps.

In this critical posture of affairs the sacred chair was ascended by its only English occupant. Nicholas Breakspear was the first of the great Englishmen whom poverty at home impelled to their high destiny overseas. The world might have gained, though the British Empire would doubtless have lost, if he had had successors. His

short pontificate (1154–9) was a turning-point in papal history. Adrian IV showed the world that Gregory VII had not lived in vain, and it was thanks to his clear head and firm will that the papacy found itself restored to a position whence it swiftly rose to the greatest heights. Placed between Rome and Barbarossa, Adrian dealt with the nearer evil first. Rome he subdued by the then novel expedient—soon to be used against his own country—of placing the city under an interdict. A Holy Week without religious services was more than the Romans could endure, and Arnold's departure was the token of their submission. Their experiences with Barbarossa were equally unfortunate. The argument that a legal right to bestow sovereignty rested with a people unable to put a decent army into the field appeared to him to be so much trash. Somebody —the secretary who wrote his speech or the historian who records it—put a touch of pointed scholarship into his reply. "Who dares to snatch the club from Hercules?" the angry King is reported to have asked. The Pope was soon to show that he disdained the Herculean club. Barbarossa felt it absurd that a great fighting soldier should stoop to hold a priest's stirrup. Adrian, who knew his man and appreciated the significance of externals to his ignorant mind, stood stiffly on his rights. The German sulked and gave way.

The episode made it clear that while the Pope was willing to crown Barbarossa in return for the subjugation of Rome, he was not prepared to become the new Emperor's creature. On the contrary, he set himself to foster the civic movement outside his own see as the best means of preserving Italy from a military despotism. There was thus formed a working alliance between the papacy and the Lombard cities which so exasperated Barbarossa that on Adrian's death he endeavoured to set up an anti-Pope. But Alexander III

was worthy to succeed the determined Englishman. Driven from Rome directly after his election (1160), he caused himself to be consecrated at Ninfa. Driven from Italy, he fled to France. Before he left he hurled his excommunication at the Emperor. These developments laid Barbarossa under the necessity of getting the Pope deposed and his anti-Pope recognized. To effect these changes he required possession of Rome, and, had he been an intelligent man, would have at once obtained it by recognizing the Roman State whose representatives he had so roundly abused a few years before. But that was not Barbarossa's way. He preferred to attack the city, and it was only after finding that Romans could still fight and only after prolonging the siege until the August suns had spread pestilence throughout his army, that he was persuaded to treat with the Roman people as sovereign (1167). Even so he did not learn his lesson. For another nine years he blustered against the Lombard republics until at last they gathered together, defeated him in battle and extorted recognition of their independence at the sword's point. Leaving the hornets' nest which he had thus disturbed, Barbarossa went hectoring off on a crusade, and was drowned in crossing a Syrian river into which he had ridden with his usual reckless imprudence.

Legend soon got busy with his ferocious personality. In a Thuringian cavern, the story runs, he sits sleeping, his paladins about him, his beard grown right through the table before him, until the day comes for him to wake and restore the German Empire. He had the outlook and the instincts of a robber-chief, and if he has been represented as one of the great figures of history this is only because the German people have characteristically made him a national hero and because German scholarship has no less characteristically sought to palliate the turpitude of their choice.

While Barbarossa was still burning his fingers in the North, Alexander III returned to Italy. Rome was closed to him, and he took up his abode in Tusculum, biding his time. Though still unable to occupy his own palace or officiate in his own cathedral, he knew how to assert his spiritual prerogatives, and it was from Tusculum that he imposed drastic penance on the powerful English King for his part in the murder of Thomas à Becket. With the victory of the northern communes at Legnano the Pope came into his own again, and was welcomed back to Rome after ten years' exile (1178). The political situation was now wholly favourable—a condition without precedent in papal history. It was governed by the alliance between the Pope and the northern cities. Both parties aimed at keeping the Empire on the farther side of the Alps. The material power of the one supplemented the spiritual authority of the other, and the combination afforded mutual guarantees of freedom. On the other hand, it could not be contended that a Pope so circumstanced was the sworn enemy of civic liberty, and in 1188, by which time the commune had learnt that the absence of a Pope was as great an evil as the presence of an Emperor, an arrangement was reached whereby Rome, in return for her recognition of the Pope's general overlordship, was left free to pursue the same course of development as other Italian cities. With so light a hand was the control exercised that early in the thirteenth century it was possible for the papal city of Rome to make war on the papal city of Viterbo until their common overlord composed the quarrel.

The good understanding was not simply maintained by papal tact, but was based on mutual interest. An over-powerful noble was a menace to Pope and commune alike, and this was precisely the period during which the Orsini and the Colonna, whose rivalry runs like

a red thread through the local history of the next three centuries, first developed strength and began to disturb the city with their brawls. The Pope was therefore glad to give his approval when from time to time the city proposed to suspend its system of government by fifty-six senators and place all its powers in the hands of one man, a foreign "podesta" with a mandate to restore order—the ingenious device whereby the Italian civic republics secured respect for their authority without saddling themselves with a local tyrant.

Only one issue threatened to disturb the general tranquillity. The precise boundaries of the papal state were matter of dispute. When the Countess Matilda died, leaving no heir, she bequeathed her own dominions to the Pope. But her own dominions formed only a part of her territory. It was agreed that she could only bequeath lands which were hers by allodial right, and that lands which she held in fee reverted to their original owners. But the territory of the Counts of Tuscany had been built up out of a complex of grants and conquests, and it was no longer possible to determine their precise title to its component parts. Rival claims were inevitably put forward, and disputed lands in Tuscany could easily provoke a conflict between Pope and Emperor. A disputed succession to the German throne gave Pope Innocent III the chance of arbitrating under conditions satisfactory to himself, and the capitulation of Neuss (1201), the document which declared Otto IV "Emperor elect by the grace of God and of the Pope"—the title is noteworthy—also defined the boundary of the papal state.

At the beginning of the twelfth century the papacy was just beginning to rise from the calamities of the close of Gregory VII's reign; at the beginning of the

fourteenth it stood on the threshold of its gloomy period of captivity in France; but at the beginning of the thirteenth it reached the culminating point of its mediaeval glory. Innocent III (1198–1216) was the acknowledged ruler of Europe. In regard to the Empire the wheel had come full circle. The time had been when a Pope could not be consecrated until his election had been ratified by the Emperor. Innocent allowed the German electors freedom to decide upon their Emperor, but reserved the right to scrutinize their choice before sanctioning it by the coronation ceremony. His relations with England testify to his boundless authority. Even Gregory VII had been obliged to acquiesce in the Conqueror's refusal of allegiance. John was no William, but even John would have resisted the interdict had not popular awe of the Pope made resistance impossible and compelled him to take back his kingdom in fee from the legate's hands.

The Pope showed his greatness not only in the range of his power but in the manner of its exercise. He combined the theory of Gregory VII with the methods of Arnold of Brescia. In the twelfth century Bologna had been the centre of Arnoldian legal studies. Innocent made Rome the Supreme Court of the world, and equipped its Pope-president for his work by beginning to codify the vast body of canon law. It was entirely fitting that the most glorious episode of his reign should have been the great Lateran Council (1215), when, with fifteen hundred prelates gathered about him, he laid down the law governing the succession to the German throne. Not that the Church was in any danger at this time of becoming hidebound by legal formulae. On the contrary, it was during Innocent's reign that monasticism underwent the remarkable development which completed the organization of the mediaeval Church by rendering it more elastic

and bringing it into more intimate touch with ordinary folk. Both St. Francis and St. Dominic did their great work under Innocent, though it was only under his successor that its effects became apparent. Change is the law of history, and since of all historical institutions there is none which changes with such bewildering rapidity as the papacy, it is impossible to linger over its brief heyday of glorious stability. But we whose lot is cast in a harassed, transitional age may be forgiven a passing sigh for the serener times of Innocent III when Christendom was at peace within the fold of the visible Church and universally acknowledged the rule of God's Vicegerent.

Political developments brought these halcyon days to an end. Papacy and Empire, the supreme dignities of the Middle Ages, both suffered from the want of funds for their maintenance. The Popes' needs impelled them to found a territorial sovereignty in Italy, but the inadequacy of the revenues derived from it led them to develop the system of raising money throughout Christendom whose abuses eventually supplied the pretext for the Reformation. The Empire was even less successful, and remained a tatterdemalion affair until after the close of the Middle Ages. But it was the constant ambition of every German prince who attained the Imperial dignity to found, in some region beyond the intrigues of his rivals at home, a rich principality which should guarantee the power of his house and free its head from dependence on the electoral college. Italy, disrupted and without aspirations towards union, was the natural field for such an enterprise, and it was the mirage of permanent Italian conquests which drew Emperor after Emperor across the Alps and into the conflict with the Popes jealously safeguarding their local independence. Curiously enough the effort which came nearest to success originated with Bar-

barossa. Male heirs failed in the Sicilian royal house, and Barbarossa, looking about for compensation for the loss of Lombardy, was moved to marry his son to the daughter of the last Norman king. If a Sicilian monarch, the descendant of this pair, were to revive the Hohenstauffen claim to the German Empire, the papacy would clearly be held in a most dangerous vice, and it was the consciousness of their peril that finally drove the Popes to wage a war of ruthless extermination.

The menace developed slowly. Barbarossa's son and daughter-in-law died young, and Innocent III had nothing to fear from their baby, whose guardian he was. But scarcely had Frederick II grown to manhood than he put forward his claim in its most inadmissible form. Sicily was not to be incorporated in the Empire, but was to remain the personal possession of the Emperor. It says much for the tact of Innocent's successor, Honorius III (1216–27) that he averted a breach throughout the eleven years of his pontificate; but on his death his pacific policy was immediately jettisoned by the new Pope, Gregory IX (1227–41).

The conflict which followed is of special interest, not only because of its dramatic quality nor even because of the tempests of criticism which it unloosed, but because it marks the first contact of the papacy with a temper then new to the world but now to be recognized as in some sense national. In Northern Italy, indeed, Frederick revived the tradition of his house and appeared as the oppressor of civic liberties. In Sicily, on the other hand, his power was above challenge. The brilliant civilization of which his court at Palermo was the centre did not result from a mere artificial amalgam of the various elements of Sicilian life, Greek and Latin, Saracen and Norman, brought

together by the force of his vigorous and gifted personality. Rather it reflected a real consciousness of unity fostered by the King and expressed in a devotion to his person and house, whose position may thus fairly be described as constitutional in the more spiritual sense of the term.

There is an obvious incompatibility between the comprehensive universal Church and the sentiment of nationality whose strength lies in its local definitions. Even on its first tentative emergence, then, the issue demanded the most delicate handling; but the Pope, blinded by personal feeling, treated it with great ineptitude. He secured, it is true, the defeat of his enemy, but at the price of provoking a critical attitude towards papal claims which led in the end to the disruption of Christendom; so that the papacy is still suffering the consequences of the fatal blunders of Gregory IX.

The quarrel was soon brought to a head. Frederick had vowed a crusade and, as soon as he was elected Emperor, Gregory, whose one object was to get this dangerous Hohenstauffen out of Europe, pressed him to fulfil his vow. At the beginning of September Frederick started for the East, but almost immediately put back into an Italian port. He pleaded illness, and the health of his troops was certainly unsatisfactory. But Gregory, without inquiry, at once punished him with excommunication. Frederick issued a defence of his actions which developed into a sweeping attack on the whole theory and practice of the papacy. But though he had reason to complain of harsh treatment, he was technically in the wrong, and admitted as much by definitely embarking on his crusade. A reasonable Pope would have been satisfied with this victory, particularly as the Church was genuinely anxious for the recovery of Jerusalem, but Gregory's judgment was now clouded by passion. In his frenzy

he proclaimed a crusade, not against the infidel, but against Frederick, tithed Christendom in the interests of his personal vendetta, and, while his enemy was actually fighting in Palestine, launched an alleged crusading army against his territory. But an outbreak of heresy in Rome itself deflected Gregory's wrath and led him to conclude peace with Frederick, who had returned home to make the best terms he could. A hundred years earlier it would have been possible for an Emperor to avail himself of the disorders to cause the election of an anti-Pope. But the present strength of the papacy put such a policy out of the question, and Frederick, who proposed to crush civic liberty in Northern Italy, was glad to make a beginning by destroying the republican movement in Rome in return for his readmission to the Church (1230).

Nine years later his remoter plans came to fruition. A sweeping victory left him master of Lombardy and free to deal with the Pope. His challenge was prompt. He sent his chief battle trophy, the *caroccio* of Milan, to Rome as a gift, not to the Pope, but to the Roman people. Gregory at once renewed his excommunication, which Frederick met by an appeal to the kings of Christendom for support against the exorbitant pretensions of the papacy. Alternatively he demanded—and this was an even more significant challenge—a General Council, which should judge the Pope as well as himself. Ink was slung freely on both sides, but his right to draw upon the imagery of the Apocalypse gave Gregory the victory in the battle of invective. There remained the arbitrament of the sword. Frederick invaded the papal state and was before the walls of Rome when Gregory arrested his attack by the one truly wise action of his pontificate. He died, and as Frederick was at war with Gregory and not with the Church, a truce immediately followed.

The cardinals drew the conclusion that hostilities could not be renewed so long as the sacred chair remained empty, and prolonged the vacancy for nearly two years. Meanwhile Frederick immediately lost ground through his inability to compel an election, and, when the needs of Christendom were at last met by the choice of Innocent IV, the Emperor had no alternative but to negotiate. Driven to desperation, however, by the harshness of the terms presented to him, he returned to his old defiance, and reiterated his old demand for a General Council.

But he had now to deal with the shrewdest diplomatist of the day. Innocent remembered the past, and realizing that the Pope's best strength lay in the revelation of his weakness, fled to France. There he mercilessly fought the adversary with his own weapons. He summoned a Council at Lyons, and this one-sided body hastened to declare the Emperor's deposition. In vain Frederick exhorted his brother kings to join him in insistence on the purification of the Church. Europe, already in travail with nationalism, remained obstinately neutral, and Frederick was driven back on his old policy of making himself master of Italy to the end that he might impose his will on Rome as a national sovereign with the whole country at his back. But his past united the north against him, and he was frittering away his army on the siege of Parma when death released him from his hopeless enterprise (1250). His failure was to all appearances complete, but events were soon to prove him the most successful revolutionary in history. His hand unaided, or aided only by the blunders of Gregory IX, had toppled down the papacy of Innocent III.

His death did not free the Popes from their local problem. To the end Frederick had commanded the devotion of his people, and Southern Italy rallied

around Manfred, an illegitimate prince of his house. The danger was met in a manner characteristic of the time. It occurred to the Pope that a filibuster might be successfully planted on the Neapolitan throne. So loose was the structure of government and society that such an adventure could hope for success. At the beginning of the century, for example, the filibustering expedition which masquerades in history as the Fourth Crusade had grabbed Constantinople. Negotiations were opened with King Henry III of England, and an agreement was actually concluded; but as no active steps were taken, a new offer was made to a French prince, Charles of Anjou. Charles, a calculating, business-like person with a keen eye to the main chance, accepted the papal invitation. It remained to find funds for the equipment of the expedition. In 1265 Charles landed at Ostia and arrived at Rome with a thousand knights, none of whom had a horse, while an army of thirty thousand fortune-hunters crossed the Alps to join him. He was at his wits' end for money, and Pope Clement IV was in almost equally hopeless case. The allies pawned everything they had to pawn, and even raised money on promises. Eventually the raiders moved south. Hunger made them irresistible, and the kingdom was won in a single battle.

Two years later the conqueror had to defend his loot against a rival filibuster, who started with the advantage of a good legal title. Conradin, the last of the Hohenstauffen line, left Germany on a brave venture for his kingdom. He entered Rome in June, was defeated in August, and met his death in October (1268). A certain element of romance attaches to him because of his name, his youth, and his pitiful end. But his failure showed that he stood for ideas which had already lost their force, and, in truth, the

question which his forbears had raised was to come to its issue in ways which made the Hohenstauffens superfluous. In any case, Conradin was not given a second chance. He fell into the hands of his conqueror, and Charles, who was not the man to maintain a dangerous prisoner or to run the risks of embarrassing pretenders, had him publicly beheaded at Naples. Thereafter the Angevin King was not disturbed from without, though the Sicilian Vespers, a massacre of all the Frenchmen in the island (1282), was a warning that sovereignty over peoples could no longer be passed from hand to hand even with papal sanction.

Such was the man to whom the papacy deliberately confided its position in Italy, and the transaction is a measure of the degradation in which the office was already sunk. This was the price which it paid for the triumphant exclusion of the Empire from Italy, but when, a few years later, the new Hapsburg Emperor formally renounced all rights south of the Alps the Pope may have read his declaration with mixed feelings. For the invitation to Charles had invoked an unexpected disadvantage. Gregory IX's harshness and the war with Frederick had destroyed the tranquillity of Rome. So serious did the situation grow that in 1252 the Romans placed full powers in the hands of a Bolognese podesta with the title of Senator for the abnormal period of three years. Many towers were pulled down by this vigorous administrator, but after his departure matters went from bad to worse, until at last, in 1264, the despairing commune had an inspiration. If a foreigner with force behind him was coming to Rome, why should he not regulate the city's affairs as well as the Pope's? To the latter's great alarm, Charles was elected Senator, and after the filibuster's success the papal position became lamentable. If Charles ruled in Rome through his deputies, the Pope had

not a protector, but a master; but if Charles did not rule in Rome, who was to control the turbulent nobility? In the end the senatorship seemed the lesser evil of the two. The French prince governed Rome with severe justice, and the grateful people thanked him by erecting his statue, which now adorns the Conservatori museum and supplements the city's magnificent collection of Imperial busts with a most interesting example of thirteenth-century portraiture.

The mediaeval papacy was now obviously nearing its end. It had lost its prestige in Europe, its power in Italy, and its authority in Rome. In 1294 the cardinals took a desperate step. In a last effort to restore its glories they elected a venerable hermit who came straight from his cell to the Lateran. The poor old man struggled for five months with a burden which he should never have been called upon to assume, and then laid it down—a wise but hardly constitutional step, for it was more than doubtful whether a Pope could abdicate. The line in Dante which damns him with undeserved harshness is now thought by the commentators to apply to somebody else—possibly to Pontius Pilate, who also washed his hands of a great responsibility.

At least the mediaeval papacy died game. After Celestine V's abdication, the vote fell on Cardinal Gaetani, a Roman of noble birth. He took the name of Boniface VIII (1294–1303), and his is the place which Dante, in the most brutal passage in literature, described as already prepared for him in hell. The last mediaeval Pope was a man of energy and passion. He ruled Rome, whose university he founded, with a firm hand. When the Colonna proved restive he deposed and excommunicated the two cardinals of their house, soothing the rest of the sacred college by granting them the right to wear robes of royal

purple. He followed up this blow by proclaiming a crusade against the whole Colonna family and by destroying Palestrina, their stronghold in the Sabine hills. Having thus made himself respected, Boniface buttressed up his power by converting the greater part of Latium into a principality for his house, and in 1300 was enabled, as unchallenged master of his own, to hold the last, and not the least successful, of the great Roman jubilees. Its proclamation was painted by Giotto, a fragment of whose picture is now affixed to a pier of the Lateran.

The end came when the Pope blindly flung himself against the rising national sentiment of France. Even before the jubilee there had been trouble over the King's claim to tax the French clergy, but Boniface had wisely withdrawn his veto. In 1301 the controversy was renewed over the pretension of the French Crown to administer vacant benefices within its dominion. The Pope issued a bull in the grand manner of a hundred years before, bidding the King pay proper respect to his superior. But the clergy rallied round the Crown, protesting its supremacy in temporal matters, and burnt the obnoxious bull. There was talk in France of a General Council, but Philip le Bel permitted a more humiliating method of putting the Pope in his place. A conspiracy was hatched of which the French envoy and one of the Colonna were the leading members. While the head of Christendom was passing the summer in his family home at Anagni, a band of roughs burst into his palace and kidnapped him. The violent deed provoked a reaction. Rome seethed over with angry sympathy, and the Pope was released, and entered the city in triumph. But the shock of the indignity broke his spirit, and he died a month later.

The hidden impossibilities of the situation now

asserted themselves. Memories of the vendetta which Boniface had pursued against the Colonna made the great Roman families quarrel over the choice of a local candidate, and the cardinals elected a Frenchman in the hope of appeasing the angry King in Paris. But what was a Frenchman to do in Rome, whose nobility would now unite in common rebellion against a foreigner? Clement V did not so much as confront the impossible task. Leaving the city at once, he placed himself under the protection of the French Crown.

Appearances were to some extent maintained by the choice of Avignon for the papal residence. The town itself was Neapolitan, and adjoined a little lordship which actually belonged to the Popes, so that technically the papacy was almost free, and was, at any rate, not in France. Moreover, it was assumed, and indeed believed, that its period of exile would be short. Not until the middle of the century, when the Popes had bought Avignon at a bargain price and had begun to erect the remarkable building, part palace, part cathedral and part fortress, which still crowns its rock, was the position faced that the centre of Christendom might be permanently established elsewhere than at Rome. But the collapse of papal authority was immediate. From the first it was apparent that the Pope was under the thumb of France, and the French monarchy did not assume the Empire's pretence to universality but was already pursuing its own national policy. In European politics, therefore, the Pope at once became a cipher, while in France itself unity had already progressed too far for him to assume the local importance which he had enjoyed in divided Italy. With nothing to do, the papacy degenerated, and though the Avignon period must be credited with honourable missionary enterprise in the

East, its main feature was the progress of corruption and viciousness in the Church.

The condition of the papacy thus invited criticism and the temper of the age was highly critical. Historical students questioned the orthodox tradition. Dante doubted the authenticity of Constantine's donation, and Marsilius of Padua boldly asked what evidence there was that St. Peter had ever been to Rome. Historical criticism of another sort developed among the extremer elements of the Franciscan order. They laid stress on the humble origins of the Church, and found in the corruption before their eyes proof enough that its present moral degradation resulted from its later habits of temporal magnificence. Most dangerous of all was the philosophic criticism of which Dante is the exponent in the *De Monarchia*. Dante attempted to find a theory of civilized society which should leave the papacy out altogether. This, though he did not realize it, was, in affect, to abandon the tradition of Constantine for that of Augustus. Authority, he argued, came from God and, under God, was bestowed on emperors by its legal guardians, the Roman people. Rome and the Empire were thus represented as the twin pillars of society at the very time when both had reached the depths of insignificance. But, like Rienzo, of whom the observation was made, and like other notable figures of the period, among whom St. Catherine of Siena may perhaps be included, Dante mistook memories for hopes. It was a futile, sterile century The old order was dead, the new order not yet born.[1]

Rome shared, in more than due measure, in the ruin that was overtaking the world. The golden age of the papacy had roughly coincided with the golden

[1] Both Dante and Marsilius dimly foreshadow modern thought. A reconstruction of Dante's argument would justify national monarchy, and Marsilius asserts that a State has rights no less than the Emperor.

age of Gothic architecture in Europe. But in Rome, especially late in the century, when papal power was on the wane and the Angevin peace had permitted a local revival of the arts, the classical temper was too strong for the new tradition to achieve more than decorative effects. These effects were, indeed, charming enough. The earlier thirteenth century beautified Rome with the Gothic tower of S. Spirito and with the cloisters of the Lateran and of S. Paolo Fuori, gracious contrasts to the grim work of the succeeding age. But in the main the great artistic impulses of the north were content in Rome with such scope as tombs afforded. To this period belong, for example, the tombs of Cardinal Fieschi in S. Lorenzo, of Cardinal Annibaldi in the Lateran, of Cardinal Anchera in S. Prassede, of Bishop Durandus in S. Maria sopra Minerva, and of the Savelli family in the Aracoeli. But it is eloquent of the limitations which Gothic work imposed upon itself in Rome that in the first and last of the examples cited the sarcophagus itself is pagan.

Sometimes, indeed, Gothic ventured on bolder flights. It erected the altar in the Lateran and filled the whole chapel of the Sancta Sanctorum. There was even a moment when it threatened to dominate Rome. Nicholas III (1277–80), who showed his sympathy with northern ideas by planning a garden in the Vatican, rebuilt S. Maria sopra Minerva in the Gothic style. But the church is unique. Nicholas III only reigned three years, and already the movement of events in Rome was directing the energies of builders into other channels. When firm government in the city came to an end on the death of Charles of Anjou (1285) the local nobles again got out of hand, each hastening to assert his strength by the height and stability of his fortress-tower. Constructionally these buildings were an immense advance on the earlier towers, hurriedly

piled up out of the rubbish left by Robert Guiscard's sack. Their solid quality is shown in the surviving examples which belong to this period, such as the tower of the Conti, the two towers now incorporated in the Palazzo del Senatore, and above all in the splendid "Tower of Nero," really the stronghold of the Gaetani family. In the new century, when the departure of the Popes had left Rome the helpless prey of its internal rivalries, tower-building went on apace, and the city assumed its characteristic later mediaeval aspect, its towers replacing its classical temples as they are now themselves replaced by its Renaissance domes.

Meanwhile the older monuments decayed. Drainage was neglected and Tiber floods did immense damage. Fire was equally destructive. Three years after the departure to Avignon, it completely destroyed the deserted Lateran palace. There was added the devastation that attends on war. In 1310 Henry of Luxemburg crossed the Alps, drawn by the old visions of Italian conquest, though to Dante he seemed the very Idea of Good in the flesh. Rome recognized the hereditary enemy, and closed her gates against him. Henry failed to fight his way through into St. Peter's, and since he could not leave the city except as Emperor accepted coronation in the ruins of the Lateran (1312). Italy continued to be harassed by the crowned Emperor for another year, when he died at Pisa.[1] He bequeathed to the future nothing but the first bands of mercenaries by which Italy now became infested, and Rome, the "ragged widow," as she began to style herself, was left to lick her wounds and brood over her great past.

In truth the mediaeval play was over. But there remained the transformation scene and the harlequinade. The former was staged by Lewis the Bavarian, who

[1] The translation of his remains to the cathedral was a feature of the Dante celebrations of 1921.

came to Rome in 1328, received the Imperial title from the Roman people on the Capitol,[1] and was crowned by that same Colonna who had kidnapped Boniface VIII. Excommunicated by the Pope, he set up an anti-Pope. But if the Pope was a cipher, his rival was not even a decimal, and Rome disowned him after his maker's return to Germany.

The harlequinade followed nineteen years later. Clown was Cola di Rienzo—and clown is after all a tragic figure. Rienzo was a man in whom the elements were so mixed as to justify the most varied judgments upon him. He was a scholar who could read inscriptions neglected for centuries, and could expound the nature of Roman Imperial power from the so-called *Lex regia Vespasiani* which he found turned face inwards in an altar in the Lateran. He was a patriot with a fine sense of the duty of Rome to the world. He was an idealist who knew what good government meant. But he capers fantastically across the stage of history, decked out in preposterous garments and distinguished by preposterous titles—Tribunus Augustus, Knight of the Holy Ghost, with costumes to match. He owed his power to a revolution which he did much to engineer. It was confirmed when he defeated the nobles whose rising the Pope had encouraged. His victory in the battle was complete. Among the slain were eighty bearers of great names, and the nobility never truly recovered from the blow, though it was not until a century and a half later that Alexander VI finally destroyed their power.

Thus sovereign in Rome, Rienzo invited the cities of Italy to send their deputies to what might almost be styled a national assembly. Local jealousies forbade a general response to the call and only twenty-five

[1] A quaint anticipation of the plebiscite which made Victor Emmanuel King of Italy.

cities were represented in the gathering, whose president —needless to say the Tribune himself—felt justified, as the mouthpiece of Rome, in assuming universal sovereignty and in inviting the world to settle its disputes before his judgment-seat. These pretensions, the grotesque fruits of that revived interest in canon law which Charles of Anjou had fostered, and which had helped to attract Aquinas to the city, were denounced by the Pope, and Rome, fearful of losing whatever gains might accrue from the forthcoming jubilee, wavered in her allegiance. The Tribune abdicated, and set forth on the adventures which brought him first to the Imperial and then to the papal Court, sent him back to Italy in the train of the Pope's viceroy and at last led him to his death on the Capitol. In his absence Rome sank back into her old hopelessness, intensified, if possible, by the scourge of the Black Death. To appease an angry Heaven, the city set itself to the one public work which it accomplished during the sixty years of its Bishop's absence—the steps which lead up to the Aracoeli church. It is said that they were moved from the Quirinal, where they had once given access to the temple on its summit. But a number of marble inscriptions were also used in the work, which is now so completely restored as to have lost all archaeological interest.

Yet the outlook was not utterly black. That the still living power of Rome was no mere fantasy of Rienzo's disordered brain had been proved by a scene which the Tribune had witnessed in his youth, and by which he may indeed have been inspired. Petrarch was the foremost poet of his age. Paris sought to crown him laureate, but Petrarch preferred the old glories to the new, and it was at Rome that in 1341 he revived a ceremony which had its origin under Nero, and received on the Capitol the wreath which

he wore in his progress across the city to dedicate it in St. Peter's. It was the dawn, or rather the false dawn, of the Renaissance. But Rome could not hope to rise from her depths until the return of the Pope made her again the centre of Christendom. Appeals to Avignon became more urgent, and the movement of events endorsed them.

The Pope had left Rome because he could not govern it. But in 1353 the Spanish Cardinal Albunoz had been sent as papal viceroy with a mandate to end the anarchy prevailing in the papal State. Albunoz was a steady, practical man with just enough troops to enforce respect. Thanks to him the Pope's dominions were made tranquil and loyal, but it was clear that they would not long obey the foreign servants of an absolute sovereign, and that they would be content with nothing short of the presence of the Pope himself. On the other hand, France, weakened as she was by her hundred years' struggle with England, was no longer able to impose an effective veto. At last, in 1367, Urban V returned to Rome—or to what had once been Rome, for he found the Lateran in utter ruin, S. Paolo in little better case, and St. Peter's so dilapidated as to threaten to collapse. To mark the significance of the occasion Urban invested himself with a new symbol of sovereignty. He added to the papal tiara the third of its crowns.[1] But for all his

[1] The previous history of the papal tiara is obscure, and the orthodox tradition appears to be misleading. It was once thought that the original tiara was composed of peacock's feathers, but this effective and relatively comfortable form dates only from the time of Leo X. The monuments supply the most trustworthy evidence of the development of the head covering, which was probably first suggested by the tiara worn by the Jewish High Priest. The Pope depicted in the frescoes of the lower Church of S. Clemente wears a stuff tiara of sugar-loaf form with a ring of jewels at the base. One crown adorns the tiara on the head of Honorius IV on his tomb monument in the Aracoeli; and two crowns appear on the effigies of Boniface VIII in the Vatican crypt and of another Pope—probably Boniface IX—in the choir-chapel of the Lateran.

triple crown, Rome was no place for Urban. He sighed for the comforts of Avignon, whither he returned. Not till 1377 did the entreaties of St. Catherine[1] and the revolt of the papal States induce Gregory XI finally to restore the papacy to its ancient seat. Its return at first involved a renewal of the old rivalries, and in 1379 civil war in Rome destroyed the lower story of S. Angelo, which had hitherto survived as built by Hadrian, and whose appearance is preserved for us in Cimabue's picture at Assisi. But the deepening of the Great Schism soon brought Pope and city together again. As Gregory lay dying—and he returned to Rome to die—he foresaw what must follow his end. It would be pull-devil, pull-baker between Rome and Avignon, between the Italian cardinals and the French. His forebodings were justified. Soon after his death a French anti-Pope was set up, and for forty years two rival heads of the Church confronted one another to the growing scandal of Christendom.

In 1409 the schism was intensified by an attempt to heal it. Both Popes found themselves deserted by their colleges, the French cardinals acting in their country's national interests, the Italians resenting new creations which threatened to impair their authority over their Pope. These mutinous bodies summoned a Council at Pisa. Its origin deprived it of all canonical validity, and both Popes were within their rights in refusing to recognize it. Its only result was to inflict a third Pope on a world already sufficiently disgusted with two. The last hope of Christendom now rested with the Emperor. As Protector of the Church, he possessed a certain legitimate influence over the Popes, and it is possible that the schism might have been nipped in

[1] In recognition of her efforts, Pius IX, who never realized the difference between the fourteenth century and the nineteenth, made St. Catherine the patron saint of Rome.

the bud had not the Imperial title then been borne by an habitual drunkard. But when the Council of Pisa only increased the confusion, a fresh opportunity was open to the newly elected Emperor Sigismund. Always well-intentioned but always out-at-elbows, it is rather hard lines on Sigismund that he should best be remembered because of the laughter in which the Council he convened was dissolved when he made *schema* feminine. After all, it is something for an Emperor to be able to speak Latin impromptu, even with slips in his accidence.[1] And it is immensely to Sigismund's credit, both as Emperor and as a Christian, that his tact and perseverance at last succeeded in assembling at Constance a Council thoroughly representative of Christendom. It was, indeed, the last Council which was to reveal Christendom as wholly united. In it Catholicism and nationality met face to face and were reconciled.

The method of reconciliation was simple. It was arranged that voting should be not by heads but by nations, of which five were recognized—the Italian, the French, the Spanish, the English, and the German, this last including Poles, Scandinavians, and Hungarians. It was also arranged that proctors representing each nation should sit with the cardinals in the conclave which was to end the schism. It was at this conclave that Roman irony reached the height of its achievement. The electors had grasped the situation. They realized that the Council, and nothing but the Council, enabled diverse national points of view to be represented in the Church, that reforms acceptable to all could therefore only originate in the Council, that control must accordingly remain with it or its successors, and that

[1] As Latin is now becoming a dead language, it may be explained that it has three genders, that names ending in *a* are regularly feminine, but that *schema*, because it is borrowed from an even more deceased tongue, Greek, happens to be neuter.

the future Pope must be no more than its President and Inspector-General. They realized further that if an Italian, or above all if a Roman, became Pope, he would inevitably try to restore the old absolutism of his office. It thus seemed certain that a foreigner must be sent to Rome. But her invincible spirit prevailed even across the Alps. The anti-papal conclave, looking about for a suitable candidate, were struck by the presence of a cardinal whose name had become synonymous throughout Europe with uncompromising hostility to the Popes. They forgot that he was a Roman, and as such would be dominated by the Roman tradition. The election was made with unexpected speed. The name of the new Pope, whose choice healed the schism and foreboded the Reformation, was Odo Colonna.

CHAPTER VI

THE RENAISSANCE AND AFTER

The new learning—The Reformation its consequence—Its influence in Rome—The temporal power—Humanist Popes—The French invade Italy—Cesare Borgia—Julius II and his tomb—The Sistine Chapel—Portent of Charles V—Adrian VI and Clement VII—Pope and Emperor once more—Battle of Pavia—Sack of Rome—Later position of the papacy—The Order of Jesus—Gregorovius' History of Rome—Renaissance town-planning—Society—Architecture—Its treatment of space—Effect on Rome—Sixtus V—An historical promenade.

MARTIN V, as the Colonna Pope styled himself, entered Rome in 1420. He came at the eleventh hour. The city had become the prize of condottieri, one of whom had lately wrested it from another of the same kidney. Its monuments were in ruins, its streets choked with rubbish, and wolves had prowled around the Vatican. The work of restoration was urgent, and Martin V, like the Roman Pope that he was, made a beginning of it by building the Lateran. His beautiful tomb, whose inscription testifies to his popularity, is not his only memorial in the church as we see it now. The splendid marble pavement is his work, and is also an illustration of the reckless manner in which Renaissance artists converted ancient material to their own purposes. But, in spite of his sympathy with the artistic movement of his time, Martin V is not yet Renaissance. His reign and that of his successor mark the transition to that great movement.

The Renaissance affected the Church both formally and spiritually, both in its organization and in its attitude towards ideas. Martin V and his successor, Eugenius IV, appreciated the former influence and practically ignored the latter. They asked no questions about the new knowledge, though they gladly availed themselves of its artistic expression. Even the monkish Eugenius IV was sufficiently impressed by what he saw in Florence to order for old St. Peter's the bronze doors which form the central entrance to the present cathedral. Yet sooner or later the fundamental question had to be faced how far the new knowledge was compatible with the old faith. It is curious how long it was left in suspense. Petrarch and Boccaccio were contemporaries. Both were humanists, but whereas it never occurred to Petrarch that there could be any truth outside holy writ, Boccaccio was fully aware that his standpoint permitted him to ridicule the Church. The same contradiction persisted almost a century later. Poggio Bracciolini and Flavio Biondo published within sixteen years of one another two books on Rome which inaugurated the modern study of its archaeology. Poggio is interested only in the ancient city, whereas Biondo also notices the churches; and the difference in treatment indicates a difference in attitude which was very definitely expressed in the two authors' respective ways of life.

A generation later the new knowledge had triumphed all along the line. There was a jettisoning, not indeed of the old faith, but of the outlook which it had engendered, and in Savonarola mediaevalism flared up to its final extinction. Mankind suddenly became passionate for this earthly life which the mediaeval Church had held in such disdain. Traditions linger latest in ceremonial, but such was the force of the new conception that it swept away a most characteristic bit

of mediaeval symbolism. After his coronation in St. Peter's a new Pope moved in magnificent state across Rome to take formal possession of his Lateran palace. On his arrival he was publicly seated in a *sella stercoraria*.[1] It was an emphatic reminder that even in the height of his temporal splendour man is but dung. The Renaissance mind revolted from the idea, and Leo X abolished the ritual.

In fact, all the old traditions and all the old restraints had lost their meaning for a generation which clutched at life with both hands. Hence the peculiar quality of the epoch—its tremendous vitality, which flooded out in all directions. It was an age of wild rush from one novelty to another. There was not a moment to be lost. Niccolo Valle, for example, had translated Hesiod and was translating Homer when he died at twenty-one. His world did not consider him precocious. Everyone was in a hurry, and was therefore satisfied with shams when good solid work would take too long. There were so many ways of building and decorating a triumphal arch that there was nothing for it but to work with cardboard and tinsel. There were so many kinds of food that fifty courses were carried in procession before the guests at State banquets. These were the extravagances of men who knew how to plan largely and execute magnificently. The Renaissance was great in its works. It was also great in its sins. In fact, the moral sense disappeared altogether. There was neither time nor room for the exercise of a faculty which originated in reflection, and was manifested in self-control. Its application must needs mean that something in life would be lost, and the Renaissance was convinced that everything in life was too good to lose. It examined it all, delighted in it all, and gave

[1] A fine porphyry *sella stercoraria* stands in the Cabinetto delle Maschere of the Vatican.

special attention to those parts of it which had been shut out of view for centuries. Hence the appalling profligacy of its literature. Hence, too, such revolting touches as Benvenuto Cellini's cold-blooded account of how he killed a man. Hence, above all, the Reformation—the reaction of the scandalized North to the movement of affairs in Rome.

It must not be supposed that the Renaissance left the North cold. The influence of Erasmus and the popularity of the *Epistolae obscurorum virorum* sufficiently prove the contrary. But once again civilization had to pay the penalty of Augustus' decision to fix the boundary of the Roman Empire on the Rhine and not to advance it to the Elbe. The Teutons were never romanized. They were thus a whole phase of thought behind the Latins, and whereas the South resumed development where it left off in the fourth century, the North had to go back to the first. Under the stimulus of the new ideas the Teuton began to ask what he must do to be saved. The Latin knew all about that question. His ancestors had grappled with it in the period between Marcus Aurelius and Constantine; the answer to it was in his blood, and had given him a sense of balance which was soon to enable him to shake off the excesses of the Renaissance as readily as he now plunged into them. But the North lacked this sobering inheritance. It hurled itself at its new problem, and before it was ready with an answer perceived that Rome, at any rate, was going headlong to the devil. In a sense it was right. Uninoculated by experience, it could not have withstood the virus generated in the Roman system. Had it crossed the Rhine, had the Teutonic mind abandoned itself to the passions and curiosities of the Italian Renaissance, it would have been swept over the precipice, like a severely trained American lad let loose in Paris.

If Martin V or Eugenius IV had been offered a glimpse of Rome fifty years after their day, the first would have been incredulous and the second horrified. Yet the causal sequence began with them. They developed the political side of the Renaissance and the rest followed. As Popes they felt it their business to make sure that authority in the Church was vested in them, and not in the cardinals or the Council. The new learning came to their aid. According to its presentation of the past, civilization had reached its highest development, not in a democratic republic like Athens, nor during the aristocratic rule of senatorial Rome, but under the benevolent despotism of the Emperors. Martin V applied the doctrine to suppress the Council of Constance, and Eugenius IV to combat the Council of Basle.

Eugenius, whose whole pontificate was an egg-dance between mediaeval and humanistic conceptions, showed special ingenuity in pouring new wine into old bottles. By way of establishing papal absolutism, he called up the ghost of a vanished world in which the Pope had been the most prominent figure. He succeeded in reviving the old quarrel with Rome, and his melodramatic flight down the Tiber (1434) was the last episode of its kind until Pius IX sought refuge at Gaeta more than four hundred years later. He effected a spectacular reunion with the Greek Church (1439) at a time when the imminent fall of Constantinople made the action of its leaders of no account to Greek Christendom. He received an Emperor of the East and crowned an Emperor of the West. He was entirely successful in so far as he drove the Council of Basle into the folly of electing an anti-Pope and thus of furthering the very schism which Councils were summoned to prevent. Nor did his work altogether perish with him. An Emperor was crowned in Rome by his

successor Nicholas V. It was the last ceremony of its kind that the city was to see. Thereafter the Hapsburgs put the words "elected Emperor" into their titles, and so made the ritual superfluous. That great tradition died out quietly enough, but subsequent Popes struggled hard to maintain the interest which Eugenius had aroused in the sufferings of Eastern Christendom. Even so typical a humanist as Pius II was an enthusiast for a crusade to recover Constantinople, and would actually have sailed with the little fleet his energies had collected had not death prevented his embarkation. The idea then faded out of politics, papal appeals falling unheeded on the apathetic ears of kings.

On balance, however, the example of Martin V exercised a more abiding influence on the Church than the politics of his successor. There had been Pope-Kings in the Middle Ages, Gregory VII heading the line. The Renaissance saw a new dynasty of King-Popes, of which Martin V was the founder. The Pope-Kings claimed the temporal rulers of Christendom as their vassals. The King-Popes held that they were temporal rulers themselves, and proposed to secure undisputed sovereignty of their dominions. Their policy was entirely successful. When everything else was shaken by the Reformation, the position of the Pope as an Italian monarch was beyond challenge, and it was from within the secure frontiers of the papal State that the counter-reformation was directed. It was in this way that the temporal power became an integral part of the system of Catholic Europe, so that it was naturally restored after the Napoleonic Wars, and the Church still feels herself forbidden to acquiesce in its destruction at the hands of Italian nationalism.

The temporal power dates from Martin V in the

sense that he devised the means by which it could be firmly grasped. His predecessors had been harassed by rebellious nobles and turbulent citizens. Martin set himself to frame a system of immediate control by his local representatives which should keep both towns and countryside in subjection. Success was not entirely achieved in his time. Eugenius IV and Nicholas V were troubled by Republican effervescence in Rome, the nobles rose for the last time under Alexander VI, and Julius II had to quell a general revolt throughout the papal State. But at least Martin V showed how the thing could be done. His problem was to find suitable viceroys. Jealous as they were of the papal power, the cardinals were obviously not to be trusted. Martin fell back on the members of his own house, already powerful locally. This was the beginning of that papal nepotism which soon caused so much turmoil in Italy. The practice was extended by the first Borgia Pope, Calixtus III (1455–8), and became systematic under the first Rovere Pope, Sixtus IV (1471–84). It affected all Italy, because the nephews would not work for nothing, and each Pope aimed at setting up some little principality for his house outside the limits of his own dominions. The country was turned upside down by these intrigues and by the marriages intended to further them. They dominated papal policy and took a fresh turn after each conclave. Inevitably they collapsed with the death of their author. Pope after Pope schemed and plotted to get his family an abiding place in the sun ; only the kinsmen of the Farnese Pope Paul III (1534–50) ruled as Dukes of Parma until Napoleonic times.

Such were the outward forms of the new age. Its spirit became manifest with the election of Nicholas V, the first humanist Pope, in 1447. The middle of the

fifteenth century saw scholars honoured as never before or since in Europe or out of it, except in China. Nicholas had been a private tutor; Pius II (1558–64), next but one in the succession after him, had been a private secretary. Both were humanists and owed their advancement to their learning. Pius II, indeed, was the most typical humanist of his time, for whose history his frank and copious memoirs are the principal authority. As Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, a layman until middle life, he had seen the world, and the sharpness of his vision was shown by his happy choice of the moment at which to pass from the side of the Council to that of the Pope. He knew Basle before his political conversion and Vienna after it. His was a romantic life, and the pictures at Siena show how well its episodes suited Pinturicchio's decorative brush. His travels had even taken him as far as Scotland, and the storm in which he was caught on the voyage thither showed that he was not quite emancipated from mediaevalism. He vowed—and kept his vow—that if he came safe to land he would walk barefoot to the nearest chapel. He paid the penalty by being racked with gout for the rest of his life. He made further amends to the spirit of the age in the choice of his papal title. There had been no Pope Pius since the palmiest days of the Roman Empire, and the historical reminiscence may have attracted him; but what really appealed was the pleasant Vergilian flavour which would cling to the name when born by a man baptized Aeneas. His successor, the Venetian Cardinal Barbo, proposed to go even farther in the pursuit of the new artistic effects. Being, as he was well aware, a man of distinguished presence, he wished to call himself Formosus II, but the ghastly associations of the name forbade,[1] and the handsome cardinal had

[1] Formosus had been the victim of the corpse synod, p. 176.

to be content to call himself Paul after the Apostle, whom his pagan auditors had likened to a Greek god (Acts xiv. 11).

These were trifles, but in Alexander VI (1492–1503) the predominant tendencies asserted themselves with a completeness which shocked even his contemporaries. Alexander was nothing if not thorough. Nepotism was admittedly the basis of papal rule. Alexander, alarmed by foreign developments, and falling more and more under the influence of his terrible son, Cesare Borgia, made the advancement of his family the main business of his life. The execution of his plans demanded a certain levity of conscience, for the Pope worked not for his nephews but for his children, and their paternity, though publicly admitted, had to be officially disavowed. The Pope told the necessary lies with unblushing solemnity. Altogether he went too far, and hostile tongues, which wagged freely after his death, did not want material for blackening the name of Borgia. Modern criticism has worked hard to redress the balance. Lucrezia Borgia, the typical wicked woman of melodrama, has been thoroughly whitewashed, and is now recognized to have been a dutiful wife of bashful disposition. Her father, indeed, remains of a somewhat dirty grey, but at least he showed courage and wisdom in confronting the great crisis of his pontificate. The day had passed for the Emperor to dream of conquests across the Alps, and Italy seemed left at liberty to settle her complex affairs in her own way. Suddenly a thunder-cloud rose in the West. The rising national spirit of France could no longer be restrained within her frontiers, and her king, Charles VIII, made the disputed Neapolitan succession an excuse for bringing an army into Italy (1494).

His expedition was a turning-point of modern history.

It was important militarily. This was the first invading army to be accompanied by artillery, Charles having brought with him thirty-six cannon, the ancestors of "Big Bertha." It was important politically. It opened the Italian question in the form which continued to vex Europe for five centuries. It was of very grim importance socially. Charles' soldiers rather than Columbus' sailors appear to be responsible for the introduction of venereal disease into Western Europe.

To contemporaries the invasion was a portent. No one knew what Charles meant to do, and no one could guess that his brain was as insignificant as his body. When he marched on Rome after his triumphant reception in Florence the Pope was advised to abandon his city. Alexander VI shut himself up in S. Angelo, and did not budge even when the invaders' cannon were trained upon his fortress. His diplomacy was active, and he succeeded in forming the first of the remarkable leagues which are a feature of the period. They are leagues of all against one—the Pope's combination brought together Rome, Venice, Milan, Spain, the Empire and, later, England against France—and belong to the infancy of the national movement. The system of balance of power under which Europe now lives had not yet been devised. The nations did not yet feel themselves securely established, so that when one became aggressive the rest took the alarm. There was, however, no reason to dread Charles VIII, and the Pope, having taken his measure, developed a new policy. Since the foreign invader had proved malleable, he argued, it were best to use him in the interests of the Borgia house.

At this time the Pope's political ambitions centred round his elder son, John, Duke of Gandia, from all accounts rather an insignificant person. But in 1497

John was murdered. His death, like the death of Sir Edmund Berry-Godfrey, is among the unsolved crimes of history, but suspicion has always attached to the Pope's younger son Cesare, who had most to gain by the deed as he now stepped into his brother's place. Proof is wanting, but the man who admittedly murdered an inconvenient brother-in-law would not shrink from fratricide. For the moment, indeed, his act, if it was his, threatened to defeat its purpose. The Pope was overcome with remorse, saw in the loss a punishment for his sins, and announced his intention of reforming the Church. It is worth noting that Alexander, whom posterity has blackguarded, was the only Pope of these times who so much as thought of reform. But nothing came of his declaration. Cesare had other plans, and soon made his father his creature. The Renaissance incarnate, Cesare is the most magnificent scoundrel in history. Audacious and unscrupulous, with a clear head and a firm will to serve his ambitions, this ruffian of genius was worthy of the tremendous compliment which Machiavelli paid him in choosing him as the man to rule Italy. Probably he hoped to wear the crown of Naples. Meanwhile his power was to be established by the conversion of the whole papal State into his principality and to be strengthened by marriage with a French princess; and this scheme was actually carried out. It would be interesting to know Cesare's views on the future of the papacy. The conclave held on Alexander's death was entirely at his mercy, but he was himself utterly prostrated by the same fever—or poison—as had carried off his father. He told Machiavelli afterwards that he was prepared for everything except his own illness. As things were, the best thing that he could do was to gain time, and he acquiesced in the election of a stop-gap Pope. But his ill-luck pursued him. The

gap was not stopped, for the new Pope died after a reign of only twenty-seven days. The interval was too short for Cesare to reassert himself, but it was long enough for his enemies to coalesce and for his allies to begin to fall away. The choice of the next conclave fell on Cardinal Giuliano delle Rovere, leader of the opposition to the Borgia policy ever since the days when he had induced Charles VIII to enter Italy while the Pope was straining every nerve to keep him at home. Cesare's position now collapsed. He was imprisoned, released, imprisoned again, permitted to go to Spain. Thence he passed into his brother-in-law's kingdom of Navarre, and was killed in a skirmish.

The new Pope showed his dictatorial temper by the choice of Julius for his papal name. There is a good deal of the Old Testament hero about him, and an illustrator of the Bible might do worse than take Raphael's portrait of Julius II as the model for his Samuel. Julius' chief task, into which he threw himself with characteristic energy, was to recover the papal State which had become a Borgia possession, and whose cities strove to make themselves independent on the collapse of Cesare's power. The Pope was his own commander-in-chief in a war which was no trivial affair, involving as it did the siege of walled towns in days when walls were still stronger than artillery. Julius knew how much depended on the spirit he put into his men. He was always with his troops, shared the hardships of the trenches, and when the wall of Bologna was breached, had himself hauled up into the opening. It was a wonderful example to be set by a man who was sixty when he became Pope and had never before known material discomfort. It achieved its object, and Julius was encouraged to push his state beyond its original boundaries. With his eye on Ravenna, he formed (1508) a universal league against

Venice, then a great power on the Italian mainland, and when Venice promptly gave way, secured himself from foreign interference by forming another league against France. This combination had the further advantage of stimulating political dissensions in Europe, and so of delivering the Pope from the danger of another Council. Wars and diplomacy involving wars compose the record of his reign, and it is not surprising that his contemporaries said of him that he wielded the sword of St. Paul but had thrown the keys of St. Peter into the Tiber. But the reproach was not deserved. Julius II lived in the most splendid days of the Renaissance, and not only appreciated its art but stood so fully on a level with its greatest masters that he was able to direct their genius into the service of the papacy. He set Raphael to decorate his apartments, Bramante to design his cathedral, and Michael Angelo to carve his monument.

"And so about this tomb of mine." It is not true that Julius II pulled down old St. Peter's because there was no room in it for the immense tomb which he designed for himself. The cathedral was demolished because it threatened to collapse. Its south side rested on the wall of Caligula's Circus, and in the course of centuries the foundation had given beneath a weight which it was not built to sustain, and the whole cathedral was all of a tilt. But it is true that Julius intended his tomb to be the principal internal feature of the immense new church whose foundation-stone he laid. Roman irony has seen to it that he has no tomb at all. His cenotaph, a fragment of the work as projected, stands in S. Pietro in Vincoli. The fact that the Moses can be properly seen has won for it a greater measure of admiration than is generally accorded to the Pietà, horribly misplaced in St. Peter's. Yet the latter is surely the nobler masterpiece of the two. The cause

of Moses' anger has been explained in various ways. Perhaps the figure is an idealized portrait of the sculptor himself, provoked by the constant squabbles to which his work on the tomb gave rise.

But Julius II does not lack his monument. In an inspired moment he bade the sculptor lay aside his reluctant chisel and take up the brush with which he painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The work glorifies the patron as well as the artist. The walls of the chapel had already been frescoed by the painters of the day, and the pictures show the weakness of Florentine art in Rome. Perhaps by way of reaction against Roman strength it tended to become too decorative, and to lose its soul in its body. The ceiling of S. Maria Maggiore, which Alexander VI had made splendid with gold brought by the Spaniards from their new realms across the Atlantic, shows how easily mere technical skill could overreach itself. Indeed, it was with good reason that Pinturicchio, most peaceful and least profound of the masters of the time, was preferred as Court painter by the Popes before Julius II. The wall frescoes of the Sistine Chapel are the work of various hands, and their common defect shows the failing of the taste which ordered them. They are clever, dainty, refined, charming—but it is not so that the Christian story of man's redemption should be told on the walls of the private chapel of the head of Christendom.

With Julius and Michael Angelo a higher spirit supervenes. The genius that informs the whole work is, of course, the painter's. But Julius was not the man to say to him, "There's your ceiling; paint it!" though, indeed, he would have given sufficient proof of his quality merely by choosing Michael Angelo when Raphael and his *bottega* were available. But the scheme reflects the brooding, lofty mind of the great

Pope. It is an essay in pessimism. It starts with God Almighty creating the world and closes with the miserable degradation of man after the flood. What hope is there for a creature who made such an end after such a beginning? The surrounding figures give the answer. His hope is in the Church—but it is the Renaissance Church. The Hebrew prophets, the exponents of the Word of God, alternate with the Sibyls, emblems of the new learning. The mark of Julius II is over all this, and it is impossible not to feel how much it holds of the Northern feeling, how greatly it would appeal, for example, to men of Milton's temper, at once religious and humanist. The Pope was seventy when he died in 1513 just before the storm broke. What might the history of Christendom have been had he enjoyed another fifteen years of life?

He was succeeded by a man of great gifts of a lower order, the Medici Pope Leo X, who gave his name to his age. It was the age which rediscovered Tacitus, and hastened to imitate the luxury and rhetoric thus revealed. An anecdote of the time sufficiently betrays it. It was said that the Spanish Ambassador, when present at a party, spat in a servant's face because everything in the room was too fine for his purpose.[1] The Pope watched it all with indolent good-nature. He was polished and urbane, and took his pleasures like a gentleman. Clever, too, in his way, for he formed a league which did enough fighting to divert political lightnings. And so, with him, the Renaissance, open-handed, light-headed, empty-hearted, danced its glittering way over the precipice. There could be no common ground between Leo and Luther.

When Leo X died the cardinals were faced with what seemed an even greater portent than Luther. Charles V, already King of Spain, had now become Emperor. One

[1] Gregorovius, viii, p. 307.

man ruled half Europe and all America; how was he to be conciliated? The cardinals opined that the external crisis could best be dealt with by a foreign Pope. It was a chance which, if seized, might have recovered for the Church what she had lost with Julius II. The ablest cleric of the day was a foreigner, and was ambitious for the papacy. The Cardinal of York was not, indeed, the man to deal tactfully with Lutheranism. But at least he would not have refused King Henry the divorce whose grant would have postponed and might have averted the defection of England. The cardinals only saw that the choice of Wolsey might displease the omnipotent Charles. They preferred a cardinal who had been the Emperor's tutor and whose favour with his former pupil was shown by his appointment as viceroy in Spain, where he had already given proof of his incapacity. Adrian VI (1522–3) was a saint because he was too stupid to be anything else. Utterly inaccessible to ideas, he understood nothing of the new movement whether in religion or in knowledge. He considered Luther and denounced him as disobedient, and therefore very wicked. He looked at the Laocoön, dug up before Julius II's eyes, and dismissed it as a heathen idol. The reasons for its presence in the Pope's palace were no more intelligible to him than the causes of corruption in the Curia. His policy was thus simple enough. The things he knew were good, and the things he did not know were bad and must stop at once because he, the Pope, so willed it. He lived in Rome for a year without acquiring the least notion of what the place meant, and when he died the wags of the city tendered his doctors the thanks which Senate and people owed to their liberators.

Adrian VI had made the catastrophe certain, for another foreign Pope was now out of the question. The cardinals, in natural reaction, reverted to the

Medici, and on Clement VII, the second Pope of that house, were visited all the sins of his immediate predecessors. He was neither a bad man nor a bad Pope. When Leo X was asked a favour he said "Yes" and forgot all about it. Clement had the courage to say "No." His administrative work was conscientiously done, and he pursued an intelligent policy. Papal power was to be strengthened in Italy by a working alliance with Medicean Florence and was to maintain the balance in Europe by adroit support of the weaker side. If the true significance of the Reformation was to be ignored—and even in Germany there were few who yet grasped it—this was the best course to adopt. Yet it failed utterly, partly because events were hastening to their crisis with a rush which no Pope could check, partly because Clement's diplomacy became entangled in the maze of its own over-subtle weaving. The example of Leo led him fatally astray. When the fighting had come into Italy, and Francis I of France had won a decisive battle, the wily Leo had fobbed off the victor, who had all Italy at his mercy, with a copy of the Laocoön, which did not get to Paris at all until Napoleonic times and is now in the Uffizi. In Clement's day the balance of authority seemed to have shifted to the side of the master of Germany and Spain, for it was not yet apparent that the Emperor-King's power was based on a quicksand. Clement, therefore, while treating Charles with apparent deference, really leaned towards France, and was caught at his double game. A show of friendliness was maintained, but there could be no real co-operation between Pope and Emperor in regard to religious affairs in Germany. On the contrary, Charles, quite unfamiliar with the German mind and anxious only to embarrass the Pope, bethought himself of the heretic Luther. The man would serve, he argued, as anti-Popes had served earlier Emperors

The argument was sound, but it involved the corollary, beyond the grasp of the Hapsburg's heavy mind, that the Church was no longer catholic. Lutheranism, therefore, was allowed to develop while relations between Charles and Francis became daily more tense.

At last the rivals came to blows in Italy. Warfare, like everything else, had begun to pass out of its disorganized mediaeval phase, and at Pavia, in 1525, the rival schools of military thought put their doctrines to the proof—French shock tactics against the stubborn in-fighting of the Germans. A few hours' mêlée decided the issue. By sunset the military power of France was shattered and overthrown, and her King a prisoner in the enemy's hands. Pavia has been compared to Sedan, and the analogy is suggestive in that, in both cases, the victors committed the same blunder. Both sought to make their supremacy permanent by dismembering French territory. The cruel terms which Charles imposed roused the French national spirit. Other nations, jealous of Hapsburg predominance, rallied in support, and the helpless Pope, who had promptly placed himself under Charles' protection but sought all the while to free himself from vassalage, fostered the combination.

His subtle intrigues brought their own punishment. The furious Charles resolved to teach a lesson to the Pope who had thus humbugged the Emperor, his partner, according to historic precedent, in the governance of Christendom. In the spring of 1527 troops were sent by sea from Spain, and an army of landsknechts crossed the Alps. Once in wealthy Italy, they mutinied for more pay. Broken-hearted by this want of discipline, their leader returned home to die, and with him disappeared from the scene the one man who might have imposed some measure of control on Spanish bloodthirstiness and German fanati-

cism. The command of the expedition passed into the hands of the renegade Constable of France, a man whose own past made him no more than the leader of a band of brigands.

Italy was now at the mercy of invaders inflamed by hatred and greed. There was, however, still the chance that they could be bought off. They named their price, and negotiations were carried on throughout March and April. But Clement's subtlety proved his undoing. To show his good faith the Pope disbanded his own army ; but his constant hope of effective help from France or Florence or both made him refuse to clinch a definite bargain. At last bad weather broke the landsknechts' patience. Hungry, penniless, and furious, they marched on Rome. The civic militia was hastily armed to guard the walls. But the raw troops were no match for men who, though they had lost their discipline, had not forgotten how to fight. On the morning of May 6th the Leonina was stormed and the Pope and his Court took hurried flight to S. Angelo. Bourbon, who might at least have held the city to organized ransom, was killed in the attack, and, their commander gone, the troops were kept together only by the hope of loot when their work was done. Trastevere was stormed in the afternoon, and at six o'clock the enemy broke through the defences of the Ponte Sisto and entered Rome. Midnight saw 30,000 soldiers let loose upon the city.

The sack which followed is the most horrible in history, and its horror is the greater because every attendant circumstance worked to the ruin of Rome. There was no prospect of further fighting to impose restraint on the leaderless troops. The Emperor, whose grievance against the Pope did not relieve him of his responsibility to Christendom, could and should have intervened. But the fishlike Charles—perhaps the

most unsympathetic personage in history after Marcus Aurelius [1]—assumed the indignant God and gave no sign. Rome was left to Spaniards and Germans, each supplementing the other's vices. The former surpassed in brutality and avarice, the latter in gluttony and sacrilege. At first sight they went their several ways. The Germans thieved and destroyed relics, the Spaniards looted and raped women; but very soon the various streams of evil were merged in one flood of loot and destruction. There could be no relief until the Pope surrendered, and had there been any authority with which to negotiate, the Pope, crowded with 3,000 other souls into S. Angelo, would have settled the terms of his ransom at once. But first the initial frenzy had to work itself out. It was not until June 5th that the Pope capitulated, and it was then too late. The troops refused to quit Rome so long as there was anything left to steal or destroy. In July a pestilence drove them to the hills, but they returned in September, and the hideous tale of murder and outrage was prolonged until the following February.

Meanwhile the Pope had thrown himself on Charles' mercy. In October a treaty was signed which made Clement his vassal. After more than seven centuries the old strife between Pope and Emperor had ended with the collapse of the spiritual power. Clothed with a universal sovereignty which even Charlemagne had not enjoyed, Charles resolved that its outward emblems should be duly bestowed on him. He would take the Imperial crown according to ancient rite. Rome, stripped bare of everything by his own soldiers, could not stage the ceremony.[2] Charles chose Bologna

[1] The most human thing about him is that he had an illegitimate daughter, but possibly only because it was expected of a man in his position.

[2] In 1536, however, the callous effrontery which he called devotion to the Church led Charles to pay a State visit to Rome, the one place on earth he should have been ashamed to look upon.

in its place and appointed his birthday, February 24th, for the date. In 1530 a Holy Roman Emperor was crowned for the last time. In self-satisfied triumph Charles recrossed the Alps—to find that his Holy Roman Empire had gone up in smoke. On his arrival at Augsburg the Lutheran States of Germany presented him with their confession.

The victory was futile, but the struggle was really over. The papacy never recovered the unfettered enjoyment of its temporal power. It continued, of course, to rule its State, an achievement due largely to the tenacity of Clement VII, who, when all seemed lost—for even Florence surrendered in 1530—restored the fortunes of his house by arranging the French marriage which made the Medici ruling princes. But though the papacy continued to govern its territory in full sovereignty, it was no longer independent. It reposed consciously on the protection of some foreign Power, first of Spain, then of Austria, and lastly of France. The new condition of affairs was revealed when Clement refused Henry VIII a divorce from his wife because she was the Emperor's aunt. England's reply was a declaration of ecclesiastical independence. It was the price which Rome paid for her political security. So secure was she henceforth that she ceased to have any political history; or rather, perhaps, her political history becomes a function of her religious history to which the sixteenth century contributed notable chapters.

The long pontificate of the Farnese Pope Paul III (1534–50) marks the transition. Himself a Renaissance man through and through, he was not left free to maintain the tradition of his Medici predecessors. The religious question had become urgent. Heresy was spreading and the schism was deepening. But the desire of pacific spirits to explore the possibilities

of reconciliation led to the colloquy of Ratisbon (1541), which was barren of result, partly because both the Pope and Luther regarded it with suspicion, but is still worth the attention of those interested in the projects, now once more afoot, to reunite Christendom —though neither the old faith nor the Reformation stand where they stood in 1540. After all, it is the only serious attempt at reunion ever made. Its breakdown led, as a matter of course, to the summons of the Council of Trent, for the Church having failed to overcome Protestantism by negotiation, must needs equip herself to fight it. Paul III was opposed to the Council mainly because Popes traditionally disliked councils, and was always on the alert for infringements of his prerogatives. But his alarms were needless. The object of the Council was to restore the authority of the Church, and right through her history her authority had been normally wielded by the Pope. Paul IV, who was elected after the Council had been sitting for some years, realized that he had nothing to fear from Trent and sought to use the Council as a means of restoring political freedom to the Holy See. He mastered the art of playing the assembled nationalities off against one another, and did, in fact, succeed in making his distant influence so far dominate its proceedings that when, after the lapse of over three centuries, another council was summoned, it met at the Vatican and, in the main, said " Hear, hear," to the Pope's declarations.

But it was not enough for the Council of Trent to settle points of doctrine. It remained to induce the backsliders to listen and this task was undertaken by the Order of Jesus. Don Inigo Lopez de Recalde, more familiarly known as Ignatius Loyola, was himself a Spaniard and found his chief support in Spain ; and it is with the rise of this militant Order and its success

in recovering apostate territories and in restoring discipline in the Church on Tridentine lines that Spanish influence became predominant in the Vatican. Under Pius V (1566–72) and still more under Gregory XIII (1572–85), the Jesuits and Spain were masters of Rome. But Sixtus V (1585–90), who was not the man to take orders from any quarter, least of all from Spain, which he hated, reorganized the papal State under his own authority, and a generation later, when the decadence of Spain had become more pronounced, Urban VIII (1623–37) asserted the papacy's right to freedom in more explicit terms. The success of Gustavus Adolphus and the embarrassments which they caused to great Catholic Powers, led the Pope to aspire to play a rôle in Europe and even to command respect as the master of an army. But the issue could not be affected by these puny efforts, and the Thirty Years War dragged on until Europe was sick of the agony and resolved to compromise. Then the political impotence of the papacy became manifest. Innocent X denounced the Peace of Westphalia as null, void, and accursed (1648), but the world, which thought the terms reasonable, took no notice.

There now remained no political part for the papal State to play outside Italy, but in the torpor which was numbing the country the Popes easily asserted their position as factors in Italian affairs. The temporal power thus came to find itself a part of the general European system, and so long as that system endured went its way untroubled by any difficulties except its finance. There was always a deficit, and the deficit was always met by an increase of debt, the service of which came to absorb the bulk of the revenues. An eighteenth-century Pope made a spirited effort to find a better way. Not only did he establish a lottery, but he threatened to excommunicate any of his subjects

who subscribed to lotteries outside the papal frontiers. The scheme was not a success, and the State might have had to declare itself bankrupt had it not been overwhelmed by the flood of Napoleonic conquest. After the storm the papacy was restored with the rest of the old system, and thereafter showed itself less reactionary in its government than Naples and less progressive than Piedmont. There was no ground for the notion, cherished just after the election of Pius IX, that it might head the movement towards Italian unity; during the centuries of torpor the Popes had developed an attitude towards ideas very different from that of their Renaissance predecessors. Politically speaking the papal State was mummified, and the fact that it was the last element of the old system to be merged into the Italian nation was due, not to its own vitality, but to the strength of its foreign protector.

The reign of Clement VII thus ends an epoch and draws a line across the historical page. A line must also be drawn across the page of literary evidence, for it is here that Gregorovius brings his great work to a close. Great is certainly the epithet for the *History of Rome during the Middle Ages*. The book is great in conception, for it proposes to set out over the course of eleven centuries not only the history of Rome itself but all the movement of events and ideas which bear upon it. It is great in execution, for every detail is noted and worked in with the thoroughness which is the pride of Teutonic scholarship. It is the good fortune, sooner or later, of everybody who walks about Rome with his eyes open, to spot some little point which he believes to be new. But the pride of discovery is damped by the thought that it may be in Gregorovius after all—and ten to one the old Hun will be found to

have tucked it away in one of his footnotes.[1] Fresh documentary evidence has, of course, become available since he wrote. Additions have even been made to the evidence of monuments, notably by the excavation of S. Maria Antica. A few passages, therefore, require to be supplemented or re-written, but the corrections are trifling when compared with the immense mass of material which seventeen years' hard work enabled Gregorovius to note and discuss. But the book is also great in its defects. Gregorovius, as he too frequently reminds his readers, was a German and a Protestant, and is all too willing to fall a victim to his national and religious prejudices. If he does not go to the length of depicting Alaric as wandering about Rome with a Baedeker, at least he is at pains to contrast the relatively slight damage done by his systematic looting with the comprehensive destruction which would have been the city's fate at the hands of Attila but for the fact that he never attacked it at all. The passage makes spicy reading in these days when the distinction between German and Hun is not so clearly drawn as it used to be.

The same prejudice has caused the matter of the book to play false to its title. According to the accepted convention the mediaeval period runs from the disappearance of the Western Empire in 476 to the Turkish capture of Constantinople in 1453. Gregorovius very properly begins with the events leading up to the sack of 410 when Rome was still ancient and less properly concludes with the events following the sack of 1527

[1] For example, it occurred to me one day as I was walking down the Via delle Botteghe Oscure that its name might indicate the later history of the arches which supported the Circus Flaminius. Reference to Lanciani's *Forma Urbis* confirmed my conjecture, and I contemplated a paragraph for the *Journal of Roman Studies* until I tried Gregorovius and found it all there.

when Rome was partly Renaissance. His period, as he explains, covers the whole record of that relationship between Italy and Germany which he believes to have been the chief producing cause of modern civilization. Be this doctrine right or wrong, it is at least most unfair to Rome, for it leaves the city in the very middle of her Renaissance phase. The period from Nicholas V (1447–53) to Sixtus V (1585–90) is a whole and must be treated as such, else the story of St. Peter's is left half-told. The sack cuts across it but does not effectively interrupt it. Structurally Rome suffered little damage at the hands of the Spaniards and Germans, who were only concerned with objects that had a religious meaning or a money value, and saw no reason to demolish buildings in which they proposed to camp so long as there was anything left to loot. Not far outside the Porta del Popolo is the gloomy little brick Church of S. Andrea, built in the generation after the sack and still carrying with it something of the depressing atmosphere of the time. But it is as classical as the Pantheon and clearly stands in the line of an uninterrupted tradition.

That tradition starts with Nicholas V. The first humanist Pope perceived that the new ideas had restored Rome to her old position, apparently lost since the migration to Avignon, as the capital of the civilized world. If the classical period mattered—and it was clear that it mattered supremely—then there was no place like Rome. The wealth of her monuments made her the logical centre of the Renaissance. If those clever young men in Florence wanted to build on the good old lines, they must needs come to Rome and make their sketches and take their measurements of the Theatre of Marcellus and the Colosseum. Indeed, every educated man would make Rome the goal of his pilgrimage. This was the treatment to which Rome was

accustomed, but where did the Church come in? Nicholas resolved that it should come in as the crown of the whole movement. It would show what classical ideas could accomplish when directed to a worthier purpose than any pagan Emperor could indicate. The founder of Glasgow University worked out his notion in a manner worthy of his large mind. He proposed to rebuild the whole Vatican quarter and make it visibly the fountain-head of the world's culture. It was to comprise a new papal fortress, a new papal palace and a new papal cathedral. The palace fared best. A great quadrangle of the Vatican was actually completed in Nicholas' day and work was started on the tribune of the church intended to replace St. Peter's. In the event the great scheme was never fully carried out, but it is due to Nicholas that, for all its pagan development, the whole history of the Renaissance in Rome centres round the principal shrine of Christendom.

With him, also, originate two other marks of the Roman Renaissance—its passion for collecting, and its interest in the lay-out of the city. Nicholas himself specialized in Greek codices, and though Paul II diverted enthusiasm for a time to coins and cameos, the interest in manuscripts remained permanent. The owners of newly discovered treasures were anxious that their good fortune should be known, and when the first printers came to Rome in Paul II's day they soon had plenty to do. Thanks to the splendid work of Aldus Manutius, Venice had the honour of producing the first printed editions of the majority of Greek authors; it is therefore noteworthy that Aldus is at pains to describe himself as Romanus—a title which was not strictly his, as he was born in Latium but not in the city itself, and whose choice is thus a tribute to Rome's encouragement of the printer's art.

In the matter of town-planning Rome had not to

admit any rival to a share in her achievement. Her problem was unique. Her walls marked her natural boundaries, but she could no longer fill the great area they enclosed, so that her buildings were dotted about haphazardly among vineyards after a fashion which the aspect of the Aventine now alone recalls. Nicholas was concerned to secure the regular expansion of the city beyond the cluster of buildings north of the Capitol, where the Via Pontificalis turned off to the Lateran. In modern language, he planned a residential suburb on the strip of the Campus Martius between the Corso and the Quirinal. To this end he laid out the roads and brought the water supply—a restoration of the Aqua Virgo. This was the origin of the modern Trevi fountain, whose name, a corruption of Trivia, preserves the memory of his work. The farther boundary of the area thus opened up was dealt with by Sixtus IV, who built S. Maria del Popolo hard by the gate. It became the custom of Popes to sleep in the adjacent monastery the night of their arrival in Rome from the north, and to make it the starting-point for their State entry the next day. Standing as it did at the head of a great line of ceremonial traffic, the Church demanded the sumptuous decoration which it soon received, and there is no building in Rome so full of the pure Renaissance spirit. Roman irony made its monastery house a pilgrim who hated the Renaissance and all its works—Martin Luther.

Three Popes separate Sixtus IV from Nicholas V, whose work he continued. The interruption was partly due to want of money, and Sixtus was fortunate in having a new source of revenue at his disposal which was not exhausted by the cost of his chapel and library in the Vatican. An incidental consequence of the capture of Constantinople was the discovery of alum mines at Tolfa in papal territory and their exploitation until the

chemical methods of the nineteenth century led to their abandonment. These mines supplied the Popes with a revenue so unfailing that it prompted extravagance.[1] Indeed, it is largely because the papal exchequer seemed to justify the most ambitious architectural schemes that, after Sixtus IV, the Popes disdained to supervise the mere lay-out of streets, and control over town-planning was only reasserted by his namesake a full century later. In the interval Julius II had thrown his energies into the rebuilding of St. Peter's, and under Leo X the great Renaissance personages had built their palaces on either side the river and had begun to give to the Via Giulia its present aspect. Had this development continued, the Tiber would have marked the line of Rome's main thoroughfare and the Corso as we know it would never have been. But the sack of Rome arrested this growth, the Reformation prevented the rise of a new Renaissance aristocracy, and the lay-out of Rome for as long as the Popes ruled it was fixed by Sixtus V. But the uncompleted line of palaces fronting the river is Rome's memorial of that rivalry between Pope and Curia which governed the city's social life until the Renaissance finally spent itself under Paul III (1534–50).

In projecting an enormous Vatican palace, Nicholas V contemplated arrangements which would keep the cardinals permanently under his own eye. The plan was little to the taste of the cardinals, who were also humanists and wanted to maintain courts of their own. Their protests went so far that every member of the conclave which elected Paul II signed a document whose effect was to make the Pope president of the cardinals' council. But a Pope is not bound by his signature as cardinal. Paul II threw the document

[1] One of its results was the recruitment of a papal military force—the famous Swiss guards.

into his waste-paper basket and at the same time indicated to the cardinals a more becoming line for their ambitions by adding to the magnificence of their robes. As the Pope intended, the cardinals now abandoned high politics and became the leaders of the intellectual and artistic Renaissance, replacing the now decadent nobility as the heads of Roman society. Paul himself kept a wary eye on the progress of events, and went so far as to bring to trial some of the members of the Roman Academy whom he suspected of being conspirators disguised as archaeologists.[1] Control was even stricter under Sixtus IV, whose moral authority was strengthened by his employment of the Swiss mercenaries now rising into fame. But the cardinals' right to independent social leadership was definitely asserted under his successor, the insignificant Cibo, who was the acknowledged father of sixteen children and took Innocent for his papal name. Alexander VI and Julius II could not do more than enforce a certain discretion in curial magnificence, and under the easy-going Leo X the cardinals assumed their full peacock glories as Renaissance Princes of the Church.

Their view of their position demanded palaces which should proclaim their state, house their retainers, and shelter their collections. Paul II had himself set the example. His Palazzo Venezia, his own apartments in which, after strange vicissitudes of ownership, again preserve his memory, presents a mediaeval face to the world. Its façade, which is nothing but the idea of a battlemented tower translated into terms of length, contrasts pointedly with the seventeenth-century work on the opposite side of the Via del Plebiscito. It contrasts equally with its own inner quadrangle. Incomplete though it is, the pillar-supported colonnade which

[1] These are the persons who have written their neo-Latin names in smoke on the roof of a chapel in the Catacomb of Callistus.

surrounds it is emphatically Renaissance. Architectural transition has been caught in the act.[1] The detail tells the same story. The lower-line windows are Gothic, that Gothic which in Rome never became more than a fashion of working, and by the time the upper line was reached was easily dropped for the Renaissance fashion which, though only just coming in, is already noticeably mature. On the other hand, the general, mediaeval tradition of style died hard—for that matter, all traditions die hard in Rome—and the system of battlements with which Alexander VI equipped S. Angelo at the very end of the century would have astonished an architect of two hundred years earlier only in the neatness of its finish.

But while these battlements were abuilding, Rome's first wholly Renaissance palace, the Cancelleria, was already near completion. The old external simplicity is still maintained in the new style. The front of the Cancelleria is unbroken and its surface is only saved from monotony by the introduction, at regular intervals, of unobtrusive pilasters. The Renaissance has not yet discovered what can be made of the window as a feature. On the other hand, it has already applied the principle which was soon to become so characteristic of its window-work. The courtyard, a massive but wonderfully effective piece of building, fully illustrates the Renaissance attitude towards space. The courtyard does not simply enclose space. On the contrary, space is itself made an element in the design. It is broken up. It has ceased to be a governing condition and has become a structural feature. Parts of it are built into the work and parts of the work are built round it. The full possibilities of the new device were not realized until it was applied to external features, and perhaps

[1] The same transition may be noted in the almost contemporary Palazzo Capranica.

it took Michael Angelo's titanic genius to appreciate what could be done with free pillars and open loggias and grandly projecting cornices, where space was made to serve as a kind of mortar joining detached elements and main structure into a unique whole.

The development is not complete yet, and if space is infinite—a matter which the physicists dispute—perhaps it never will be. At any rate, modern Renaissance architects, particularly in France and the United States, prove their style still fertile in new surprises. At Rome it never achieved such supreme total effects as at Florence and Venice, though the story might have been different if St. Peter's had not been spoilt. On the other hand, its partial effects in Rome are unsurpassed. The most famous of them all is a trick—the trick played in the Palazzo Massimi, where one pillar, and the space about it, is made to suggest a whole quadrangle.[1] But the finest example of all, and one about which there is no trick, is the river loggia of the Palazzo Farnese. The loggia is only a feature, and so far as mere dimensions go not a very large feature. But even when seen from as far off as the Janiculum, it is one of the most dominating things in Rome. There is no better proof anywhere of the great architectural truth that no aggregate of stone, no rough-hewn monolith even, gives such a rich, monumental, overwhelming effect as a good thick slab of solid black space.[2] The truth was appreciated by the best Greek architects but in a different way. They made an outer line of columns catch hold, as it were, of a piece of surrounding space and attach it to the temple inside. The Renaissance architects, who wished their buildings to tell by their own mass, used space, conversely to give effect, not to the whole,

[1] The same trick is played internally in the false transept of S. Maria in Campitelli.

[2] The same effect was also obtained in internal loggias. But these have mostly been roofed in, as in the Vatican.

but to the parts. The ancient Roman architects did not use space at all. They simply enclosed it. In this restraint they showed their wisdom, for had they sought to incorporate it they would have ruined the effect of the solid decoration with which they loved to cover their exteriors. Therein lies the whole difference between the Palazzo Farnese and the Colosseum.

A point which arouses wonder is that, in view of the great rapidity with which the style developed, the architects should have commanded the material means of achieving these increasingly impressive results. As a matter of fact, they did not command them. Architecture in the Renaissance reversed—at any rate in Rome—the conditions of our own day. Now it cannot take full advantage of its material resources, then it was infinitely ahead of them. If Bramante, Michael Angelo, Peruzzi, and the rest had depended on stone brought from a quarry, their palaces would never have been built at all. Take, for example, the surprising case of the Vatican obelisk. The ancient Romans brought it from Egypt without making a fuss. The Renaissance Romans wanted to move it a few hundred yards and took more than a century over the job. The idea was mooted under Paul II ; it was carried out under Sixtus V because the Pope believed in his architect, Domenico Fontana, and defied the critics. Domenico himself was so proud of his engineering feat, which certainly amazed his contemporaries, that he wrote a book, all about how he planned it and how he carried it out with forty windlasses, seventy horses, and nine hundred men. If these builders, who shrank from shifting an obelisk, nevertheless faced the construction of the largest church in Christendom, it was because their material lay conveniently to hand. The stones of the Colosseum were their quarry and looted marbles supplied their mortar. The actual destruction

of ancient monuments was not very great. What was standing was generally spared. But whatever had fallen or had been buried was treated as legitimate plunder. Time wrecked the buildings and the Renaissance used up the wreckage; and when the Church had finished transforming the spirit of the old Empire it built St. Peter's out of its material ruins.

But the soul of Rome survived it all. Elsewhere the Renaissance fell away into prettiness and affectation and all the jolly extravagances of rococo, but the austere, satirical genius of Rome forbade such excesses within her walls. Bernini, for example, had it in him to do terrible things. But when he let his imagination sprawl in the fountain he put up in front of S. Agnese, mocking critics discovered that his Nile was shielding his eyes from sight of a façade designed by his sculptor's rival, Borromini. The remark was prompted by the spirit of Rome, to which Bernini, to do him justice, was properly sensitive, and when the colonnade of St. Peter's gave him his great chance he took it like a Roman. The idea was appalling. Cathedral and piazza together were to symbolize the visible Church that embraced all humanity, with the dome for head and the nave for body and the colonnade for her enfolding arms. But the execution is magnificent and the great ellipse with its severe Tuscan pillars is Rome through and through.

The same austere dignity prevails in secular architecture and its persistence even in the later work is striking. What looks the most rococo building in Rome, the Palazzo Spada alla Regola, whose overdecorated front anticipates the cinema theatre, is not really rococo at all but good sixteenth-century work whose severity a later generation sought to brighten up. The worst case—and it is not really bad—of true seventeenth-century excess is the palazzo built by

Borromini in the Via Giulia, where the capitals of the pilasters are converted into fantastic owls' heads. The Palazzo Barberini, on the other hand, shows how this exuberance was generally kept within bounds. Built by Urban VIII, it is about contemporary with Inigo Jones' banqueting-hall in Whitehall. In both buildings the ornament shows a tendency to get out of hand. The Palazzo is certainly overloaded and the effect of its upper windows in particular is almost smothered in its own detail. But Roman taste also had a leaning towards the grotesque in which English taste was too sober to indulge. The Palazzo shows how the taste could be gratified and no harm done. It is allowed prominent and rather attractive expression in the pillars of the screen in front of the garden, and is thus isolated from the main structure whose real solidity it serves to emphasize.

Cases could be multiplied of this discretion in the use of popular fantastic ornament. In themselves the decorations of the Consulta are frigid conceits, but instead of being spread broadcast as such things are wont to be, they are concentrated on the three principal entrances, where they serve to distribute the façade and to emphasize its beautiful colouring. The portal of the Quirinal opposite illustrates the same quality in a point of detail. The lintel is finished off by a broken arch, a device which is curiously popular with modern architects in spite of its restless, disturbing effect. The drawback is emphasized if reclining figures are placed on the slopes of this arch, since obviously they threaten to slip off ; and the height of the ludicrous ought to be reached when the slithering figures represent St. Peter and St. Paul. But the gateway of the Quirinal provokes no smile ; it is undistinguished work but passable enough. One other instance is too striking to be omitted. There is a house in the Via Gregoriana,

the doors and windows of whose lower story are the gaping mouths of monstrous heads. The idea is preposterous, but the house is quite dignified. In such ways does Rome keep the later Renaissance in order, and the one work in which fantasy is allowed to run wild is the Trevi fountain, where the use of water explains and justifies it all.

Cities, like peoples, get the government they deserve. To Rome, late in the sixteenth century, when her characteristics began to be threatened by later Renaissance tendencies, there fell the government of Sixtus V (1585–90). Elizabeth of England knew his quality, and it was not wholly in mockery that she called him the one man worthy of her hand. His own held his State in a comprehensive grip. His conceptions were large, though his Franciscan training made them strictly utilitarian. He suppressed brigandage, built roads, restored aqueducts, drained marches, and fostered industry, and it was in this broad, practical spirit that he dealt with Rome. He was well equipped for his task, for he had been out of favour with his predecessor and had spent the years of his retirement in artistic study, which had taught him how to make of Rome a traditional, authoritative, organized, up-to-date place, the true reflection of the Church whose citadel it was.

There was no sentimentality about Sixtus V. For the past, as such, he cared nothing, and had no hesitation in wrecking Bramante's courtyard to find a site for his own magnificent library. Only where the past could contribute to his projected effects did he call it into his service. To him the obelisks of the Lateran, of S. Maria Maggiore, and of the Piazza del Popolo owe their present sites, and the Columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius the statues which they now support. These characteristic works were but the by-products

of his immense energies. He was Pope for five years only, but he made Rome as we still know her. He unified her by a system of roads intended to link up her principal churches. One of them joining S. Trinita dei Monti with S. Maria Maggiore—it is perhaps the most characteristic street in the city—still in part bears his name. It was crossed by his one important secular road—the forerunner of the present Via Venti Septembre—laid out to facilitate communication with his friends in Florence from his palace on the Quirinal. The junction at the Quattro Fontane controlled the future growth of Rome, replacing Nicholas V's Trevi cross-roads of a hundred and fifty years before.

The churches received his special attention. He completed the Lateran, modernized the plan of S. Maria Maggiore, and built the dome of St. Peter's. For posterity this last work involved all the rest. In the century after him Rome lifted her crop of domes, big and little, good and bad—echoes all of them, clear or faint, sweet or discordant, of that great diapason in stone across the river. Because they are echoes, they are unreal though never flimsy, and thus most happily characterize for us folk of to-day the Eternal City whose aspects perpetually change. Though they no longer rise from green spaces to pay their homage to their great exemplar opposite, though the new Italy has come crowding round them with her buildings, most of them fortunately severe and inconspicuous,[1] they still dominate and so still keep Rome Sixtine.

Sixtus V found the centuries side by side and left them fused together; to him, therefore, Rome owes her strong pervasive historical atmosphere, instantly felt but hopeless to analyse. Before his time it may have been possible to see it all; nowadays only the

[1] The Palazzo di Giustizia is an unhappy exception. It is prominent and giddy.

rare scholar who has spent a lifetime in the study of monumental and documentary evidence can hope to distinguish the items composing his impressions during a morning walk. We ordinary folk can do no more than keep our minds sensitive to the wonderfully rich closely woven texture of fact and tradition which is Rome. In that spirit let us stroll from the Piazza Venezia down the Corso to the Piazza del Popolo, through the heart of modern Rome, along the most historic mile in contemporary Europe.

The new Italy makes herself emphatically felt at the outset. In grandiosity of conception the Victor Emmanuel monument is worthy of the city which holds the Colosseum and St. Peter's. Harsh things have been said of it, but until it has mellowed—as yet it is far from finished—it is cruel to declare that it will look best in decay. The architectural conception of a huge staircase leading up to a colonnade is worthy of the august site; where the work fails is in the statue. No single figure, however gigantic, can fill the central space in so great a scheme. It would have been better to have set up a symbolic group—perhaps the King supported by the cities and provinces of Italy—reaching from side to side of the great staircase. In any case it was bad art to design statues on seven different scales. Nor is gilded bronze the proper material; copper would have made a better contrast with the marble. As it is, the King's statue does not appear to be placed in its setting but to be dissociated from it, and this is precisely the effect that the work was intended to achieve. The visitor should note its significant appearance from Raphael's loggia in the Vatican, how the marble colonnade catches the eye and promptly throws its glance on to the glittering figure, so conspicuously isolated, in front of it. So the work must appear, and so surely it was intended

to appear, from the Pope's windows on the opposite side of the quadrangle, and the monument thus recalls not only the great Italian issue of the nineteenth century but also the hundred and fifty revolutions which diversify the mediaeval relations between the city and her Bishop. But Rome, which preserves old antagonisms but robs them of their bitterness, has already laid her tranquil hand upon it. The burial in the monument's heart of Italy's unknown warrior has made it an object on which the eye of an Italian Pope can rest with pride.

Thanks to that hallowing ceremony, the new Italy presides over Rome's central piazza with a fuller and more moving effect than was planned by the designer of the monument. All the past is gathered up about it. The site itself was first a Benedictine and then a Franciscan monastery, and ages before either had been the citadel of the primitive Latino-Sabine community. Hard by, the Column of Trajan stands like a pointer, tracing the gradual movement of the city's centre northward from the Forum. Opposite is the Palazzo Venezia, with which the Renaissance made its first great mark on Rome, and tucked away under the Palazzo's wing is the Church of S. Marco which, though of ancient, perhaps even of Constantinian, foundation, later became the national church of the Venetians. A number of such national churches were founded in Rome during the fourteenth century, but it was unusual for a Roman Church to be assigned to the use of an alien people. The name S. Marco and the connection of the adjacent palace with Venice account for the transfer in this place.

The corner building of the Corso is the insignificant palazzo in which Napoleon's mother died. If excavations were made beneath it, traces would probably be found—as they have been found under the adjacent Palazzo Doria—of the polling booths erected by Julius

Caesar which stood on the site in ancient times—a fine piece of century jostling. The Palazzo Doria itself is an admirable illustration of Renaissance good taste. The lines of the ornament over the windows are bunched up in a way that would look meagre enough if the front faced an open space, but gives just the right effect when seen across the breadth of a narrow street. Opposite is a modern building in the Florentine style which serves to point the difference between Roman and Tuscan genius.

Memories now begin to crowd in. The Church of S. Maria in Via Lata, with its Napoleonic tombs, marks the site where tradition records St. Paul and St. Luke as having taught. It is not a very probable position for St. Paul's " own hired house," but it may very well be that the Apostle had the use of a largish room in the Saepta Julia, just as he used the lecture-room of Tyrannus at Ephesus. A little way to the left is the centre from which the Jesuits directed the counter-Reformation, and standing back from the Corso on the right is the Church of S. Marcello, which dates back to the organization of Roman Christianity in the fifth century. Here too, then, the centuries jostle happily enough, but the Piazza Colonna and its neighbourhood go one better. The column itself points back in its form to Trajan and forward in its matter to a later age. In two episodes, both low down and easily visible, stress is laid, almost in the mediaeval manner, on the divine support given to the Roman arms. In one the enemy's camp is set aflame by fire from heaven, in the other an opportune tempest stops an attack and the Romans are seen rallying under the cover of the storm-god's protecting wings.

The column has watched many changes round about it and must feel that old times are almost coming back again now that a Renaissance building is rising across

the road. This building,[1] like the new north front of the neighbouring Chamber of Deputies, shows that, to succeed in Rome, the Renaissance style must abide by its traditions. In so far as these designs fail—and neither is an entire success—it is the result of attempting light touches, proper in Paris but out of place here. Somewhat to the right is the Church of S. Silvestro, where English Catholics worship. The column was once in its custody and its courtyard is rich in fragments of the Temple of the Sun which it replaced. Epitaphs of persons buried beside the old Roman Via Lata are fixed on to the walls. The adjacent monastery is now the General Post Office and still maintains, especially in the registered letter department, its old cloistral aloofness from the world. Behind the column is a building adorned with pillars which, curiously enough, were brought from Veii ; Rome, so rich in marbles, has herself borrowed for once. Round the corner to the left is the Temple, now part of the Chamber of Commerce, whence came the reliefs of the provinces of which some are on the Capitol and others scattered far afield. On the other side is the Chamber of Deputies. In the Renaissance front are imbedded large blocks from an older building. The back has been given an ambitious new façade of pink brick and white travertine, known to the profane as the " strawberry ice." The building as a whole is still unfinished and is altogether a thorough epitome of modern Italy. Even the slight rise of ground on which it stands is profoundly symbolical. Here the Emperors were once cremated and the mound is formed of the charred fragments of their pyres, so that in Rome democracy has literally set its seat on the ashes of despotism.

A little farther on is the dignified Palazzo, now a

[1] Its future use is uncertain ; it was designed as the head office of a bank which has collapsed.

bank, in which Shelley lived when in Rome, and the next corner holds a cluster of associations reaching from the early Empire to the late Renaissance. Here stood the Altar of Peace which Augustus erected as a memorial of his work for Rome. Such of its slabs as have been excavated are scattered ; others are still to be dug up. Here, too, the street was once spanned by an Imperial arch, possibly the arch commemorating Claudius' conquest of Britain, half the inscription on which is still preserved. The arch was demolished by a seventeenth-century Pope because it obstructed the riderless horses whose race down the Corso was an attractive and dangerous feature of the Carnival. In the neighbouring piazza stands one of Rome's oldest churches, face to face with one of her smartest cinemas. The name, S. Lorenzo in Lucina, is of interest. The genitive was the first of the Latin cases to go, its places being taken by the preposition "in" with the sense of "of." S. Lorenzo in Lucina is thus Lucina's S. Lorenzo, Lucina being the Roman lady who founded it. Her choice of St. Laurence, the martyred priest, as its patron saint was doubtless a mark of respect for the clergy. In a place like Rome, St. Laurence was naturally held in special reverence, and it is on this account that the linguistic survival of "in" as the equivalent of a genitive is associated with his name. There were four Churches of St. Laurence in Rome. The chief of them was sufficiently distinguished by its position "*fuori le mura.*" The others bore their founders' names. This is one. The second, S. Lorenzo in Miranda, is the converted Temple of Faustina. The third is S. Lorenzo in Damaso. The church in the Cancelleria which now bears that name replaces the building put up, or at least converted to religious uses, in Pompey's theatre by the fourth-century Pope who cherished such a special devotion for the martyrs.

The Corso Church has its associations with English literature; Browning's Pampilia was married in it.

The next busy cross-street on the right gives a glimpse of S. Trinità dei Monti up on the Pincio, one of the landmarks of Rome and associated with the Kings of France from Charles VIII, who founded it, to Louis XVIII, who restored it. At its foot is the little brown house where Keats dwelt in Rome. A street on the left, just past the Lombard national church, leads to an Imperial monument, which would be of the utmost interest if it were more accessible. Here Augustus built a mausoleum for himself and his house. It was flanked by the obelisks which now stand on the Quirinal and in the Piazza del Popolo, and by the bronze pillars bearing the great autobiographical inscription of which an almost complete copy exists at Angora—not an accessible place nowadays but an integral part of Augustus' Empire. The tomb chamber of the mausoleum is preserved below ground, and what remains of its contents has been moved to the Vatican. Nerva was the last Emperor to be buried here. Nothing of the original structure is now visible, but the clearance of the surrounding buildings would doubtless expose part of its walls. Its history has been eventful. In the early mediaeval period the mound, like other isolated peaks throughout Europe, bore a chapel of St. Michael. Later the Colonna seized the place and made it a fortress, until the exasperated Romans demolished it, leaving only the shell. The ruin then became successively a bull ring, a theatre, and a circus. It is now a concert hall where the best music in Rome is performed, and the devotion of this historical site to a worthy purpose is one of the glories of modern Italy.[1] Hence the Corso

[1] It is also one of the shames. Every Sunday afternoon throughout the season a crowd gathers at the gallery door and, when it is opened, fights wildly for admission. The military police cannot be said to

pursues its way among buildings recalling the stolid, pompous Rome of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, past houses associated with Michael Angelo and Goethe, between two neat but stately Renaissance churches, and out into the wide Napoleonic piazza with its church so full of remains of the great Renaissance Popes, its gate built in honour of a Swedish Queen's repentance of her Protestant heresy, and its central obelisk on whose base Augustus and Sixtus V have carved their names in illuminating juxtaposition.

And so to the Pincio to watch the sunset.

control it, though when the crush is greatest a number of them link arms, thrust their way in, and hold up the pressure. There is no sight in Rome which so shocks the Englishman. Similar scenes are said to be enacted round the buffet when the municipality gives a reception on the Capitol.

IV

CHRISTIANITY AND ITS BUILDINGS

CHAPTER VII

ORIGINS OF THE BASILICA

Cardinal Wiseman's theory—Objections—Spiritual life of early Empire —Syncretism—Mithra—Isis—The Isiac Church—The Jewish Synagogue—Vitruvius on the Basilica—Difficulties of the term —The catacombs—Christianity as a burial club—The *Liber Pontificalis*—Origins of the "tituli"—Meaning of the word— —Greek lecture-rooms and Roman houses—Complex origin of the basilica—The new discovery.

CARDINAL WISEMAN, a learned man who knew and loved Rome well, once wrote a story-book called *Fabiola,* which is still read by good little Catholic boys and girls at the age when their Protestant cousins suffer under *Eric, or Little by Little.* As the Cardinal explains in his preface, the book was intended to introduce a series exhibiting successive phases of the continuous Catholic tradition. *Fabiola* deals with the first of them—the Church of the Catacombs; the next volume would be concerned with the Church of the Basilicas. Adopting the archaeology current some seventy years ago when his book was written, Cardinal Wiseman gives dramatic point to his thesis of continuity by evolving the latter Church out of the former. As evidence that the basilica originated underground he gives a description of the church in the catacomb of St. Agnes. It consists of two tomb chambers separated by a gallery. The male members of the congregation stood in the one, the female members in the other, and the larger tomb

chamber has been extended behind the altar into an apse which accommodated the bishop and clergy. "We have thus," writes the Cardinal, "the exact arrangements to be found in the churches built after the peace and yet to be seen in all the ancient basilicas in Rome—the episcopal chair in the centre of the apse, the presbytery or seat for the clergy on either hand, and the altar between the throne and the people. The early Christians thus anticipated underground, or rather gave the principles which directed the forms of ecclesiastical architecture."

That a church was constructed in the catacomb of St. Agnes is, of course, beyond all doubt, and other subterranean churches have been discovered since Cardinal Wiseman's day, notably a large one with an apse at Ostia; nor is there any reason to question the tradition that a Pope was actually martyred while saying mass in a catacomb during the Decian persecution. But there is every reason to doubt the conclusion that the catacomb church supplied the model for the later basilica, and the doctrine that Christianity was driven underground for a comparatively long period before Constantine is now generally abandoned.

With its abandonment there must needs be jettisoned a rather pretty point of architectural aetiology. The persecuted Christians, it was suggested, looking about in the catacombs for a suitable place of worship naturally availed themselves of the space provided by the intersection of the galleries. Their churches were thus of necessity built round a cross, and when the Christians again came up into the light of day they brought the cruciform ground plan with them. It is an attractive argument but archaeology and history are against it. The typical basilica, as it still exists in Rome, was not cruciform at all. Its transept, when indeed it had a transept, did not normally project beyond the aisles,

and without such projection the ground plan is not cross-shaped ; nor was it until the great architectural movement across the Alps in the eleventh century that the cruciform plan definitely established itself as orthodox.

A far stronger objection to the catacomb theory is that the basilica emerges at once as a well-developed architectural type. The oldest basilica, any substantial part of which is still standing, is S. Maria Maggiore, and as this church was not built until more than a century after Constantine's death, there was plenty of room for progress in the interval. But the history of the basilica type can be traced with certainty to a date anterior to any existing building. Until its destruction by fire a hundred years ago, S. Paolo Fuori le Mura remained as it was built late in the fourth century. But the case of old St. Peter's is even more conclusive. The church, which was finally demolished under Sixtus V, was the church built by Constantine himself. Before its destruction it had been studied in detail by Renaissance artists, whose drawings survive and give an entirely accurate idea of its structure. It was an elaborate basilica with a great nave flanked by two aisles on either side, and it is obviously out of the question for such a building to have been evolved at once out of the catacomb type.

The historical tradition points the same way. The scene of *Fabiola* is laid in the early days of the fourth century, during the last and worst of the persecutions, and Cardinal Wiseman depicts the attitude of the outside world towards Christianity as still very much as it had been when Pliny was getting his instructions from Trajan nearly two centuries earlier. He even goes so far as to declare that epicureanism was still the fashionable philosophy. Modern scholarship, which has re-examined the literary evidence under the stimulus of the new material revealed by the spade, has gone

far towards filling up what was still a historical blank in Cardinal Wiseman's day. We are now taught to look upon the Roman Empire as a period of political sterility but of revolutionary spiritual transformation. The movement started with Augustus and was already well developed by Nero's reign. The public which read and admired Seneca was obviously little interested in political virtues but was very greatly concerned with the state of its own soul, and the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers to whose lectures St. Paul listened at Athens were making the transition from the ethics of citizenship as laid down by Plato and Aristotle to the purely personal code of Marcus Aurelius. In the period of confusion and misgovernment which was Marcus' legacy to the world, the new tendencies asserted themselves strongly. The demand for a personal religion became insistent and the mysticism of the time sought expression in the worship of Isis and Mithra before it was finally satisfied by Christianity. With the accession of Septimius Severus the court definitely abandoned the old orthodoxy, and under the later princes of his house, Africans married to Asiatics, a form of monotheistic sun-worship became more or less established as a State religion.

Side by side with it were a number of other faiths, all Oriental in origin, all rich in their emotional appeal, and all offering the soul some refuge from the loneliness, some support against the weakness, and some comfort in the wretchedness, by which it felt itself almost overwhelmed. All these faiths were in active competition with one another, and the writers of the period, particularly Lucian, give glimpses of storm-tossed souls passing from faith to faith in search of peace, and hoping to find it in some individual combination of elements selected according to taste from the variety of rival ceremonies and beliefs.

The competing religions themselves facilitated the process. Each had its own principle but each sought to make its principle more universally attractive by surrounding it with details borrowed from a competitor. Ideas originally distinct thus became blended. Faiths which had taken their rise in Persia, Syria, and Egypt had all been given a common tincture of Hellenism before they reached Rome, and in Rome they competed, jealously indeed but without great mutual intolerance, for adherents among a population as mixed as that of modern Constantinople and modern New York combined. Syncretism is the name given by the scholars of our own day to this breaking down of religious frontiers which was going on apace throughout the third century. Christianity was certainly not uninfluenced by it. Not that Christianity syncretized with the rest. On the contrary, the quality which characterized the Christian faith and which alone can explain its eventual triumph, was the purity with which it was maintained. But subject to this important limitation, the early Church obeyed the apostolic precept and was all things to all men, and it is this fact which accounts for what would otherwise be inexplicable, the amazingly rapid growth of heresy which becomes apparent in the fourth century as soon as Christianity is free to conduct its controversies in the light of day.

To some extent this policy was pursued unconsciously. Men and women who were already mature when they embraced Christianity brought with them established habits of worship acquired in other faiths, and these habits would not be suppressed except in so far as they ran obviously counter to Christian principle. Parallels to what must have occurred could be supplied by any modern missionary out of his own experience. But to some extent also this policy was deliberate. In the early days of the faith the Christians

of each city formed a little group, and contact between the various communities could easily be maintained by the system of itinerant Apostles contemplated by St. Paul. But in the Rome of the third century the Church had to provide not only for the already large number of its members, but for the increasing multitude of its converts. Thanks to the organization imposed upon it in Rome during the first three centuries, the Church emerged from the persecutions not only united but with a tradition of unity so strong that it survived the racial and political confusions of the Middle Ages, and was not finally broken until the rise of nationalities. In addressing herself to this tremendous problem of government Rome was true to her past, and she was no less true to it if, as modern research persistently suggests, she laid the foundation of her success by refusing to confront her spiritual subjects with anything aggressively startling in the way of organization. Apostolic guidance being necessarily wanting, the Church felt herself free to borrow and accommodate to her own needs whatever she found of system in the faiths which had spread through the Empire before her and which she was equipping herself to supersede.

Isis and Mithra were the principal divinities of the third century, and Mithraism in its latest phase bore such noteworthy resemblances to Christianity that the triumphant Church regarded it as an invention of the devil and set to work to exterminate it completely. For this reason not a scrap of literary evidence as to its tenets has survived, and its characteristics must be inferred from the hundreds of Mithraic churches which have been excavated in recent times. The great Belgian archaeologist, Professor Cumont, has devoted his life to the examination and discussion of Mithraic monuments, and it is to him that we owe our present knowledge of the nature and wide dispersion of the

Mithraic faith. It was a soldiers' religion and its monuments are found in great numbers along the frontiers of the Empire. Mithra himself was the representative of the beneficent cleansing powers of the sun and was engaged in a constant struggle against the forces of evil. Evil had been slain at the beginning of the world and all creation had sprung from its blood. It would be slain again at the end of the world, when all creation would be redeemed by its blood. Meanwhile man's duty was to fight against evil, with Mithra as his unconquerable captain.[1]

A baptismal rite initiated the soldier into the warrior's band and a communion service sealed the fellowship. There was no metaphor about the blood. The brute evil forces were represented by a bull, whom Mithra slays on countless monuments in a motive borrowed from Greek art,[2] and neophytes were actually bathed in bull's blood. In many of the monuments scenes from Mithra's life are depicted round the central subject, and as one of them is an adoration of magi, it is not surprising that the Christians detected diabolical influences at work. The borrowings were, however, not all on one side, as the name and dignity of Sunday sufficiently prove. But it does not appear that Christianity borrowed its organization, and least of all its architecture from the last and greatest of its rivals. Mithraic chapels were always small. When the community grew, a second chapel was constructed. Moreover, the Mithraic chapel was always subterranean—an artificial cave, not a building.[3]

[1] The hymn "Onward, Christian Soldiers," is definitely Mithraic in tone, and would probably have shocked a third-century Pope.

[2] The design of the Greek original is shown on a slab appropriately placed behind a Mithraic monument in the Vatican (Animals Room 113). The motive was derived from the temple of Nike Apteros at Athens.

[3] There is a Mithraic chapel under S. Clemente, and though this building is of cave-like appearance it was not originally underground. But the exception proves the rule if, as may well be the case, the room was converted to Mithraic purposes in the pagan revival under Julian.

Isis worship, on the other hand, was eminently public. Isis was the woman's deity as Mithra was the man's, and she ruled in the cities as Mithra on the frontiers. Originally Egyptian, but clothed with many of the attributes of the Syrian Great Mother and thoroughly Hellenized before she came to Italy, Isis appeared to the Greco-Roman world as the compassionate Mother of Sorrows, who forgave even the murderer of her son. Apuleius, writing as a convert to her faith, has left a vivid picture of her worship. She had her priests, her liturgy, and her churches. A procession was formed which marched through the streets, gathering adherents as it went, and finally entered the church where the goddess was hymned. No Isiac church of the fully developed faith survives. The temple at Pompeii belongs to an earlier date when Isis worship had not yet become the public melodramatic affair which Apuleius describes. But anyone who visits S. Maria Maggiore with Apuleius' account in his mind must be struck by the suitability of the church for Isiac ritual. In S. Maria Maggiore, as indeed in all basilicas, the nave is everything, the aisles nothing. With such a building it is easy to imagine the irruption of a great, excited crowd in procession. The devotees of the goddess fill the great nave and raise their hymn, while the inquirer is drawn aside by a priest into the tranquil recesses of the aisles and there learns from him something of the exaltation with which Isis inspires her initiates.

It is thus easy enough to associate a basilica with the requirements of Isis worship; it is far less easy to reconcile it with the forms of Christian devotion. Oddly enough, the orthodox views of public worship in early times fail to explain the use of the nave. The clergy, it is said, were gathered in and about the apse; the penitents and catechumens remained in the porch;

the congregation filled the aisles, men on one side women on the other. On this view the nave was left empty, except perhaps when communicants were waiting their turn to receive the Eucharist, to be filled up as the Church developed by the encroachments of the clergy and choir from the apse and of non-communicants from the narthex. How, then, is it possible to account for the relatively enormous dimensions of the nave in the earliest basilicas? Partly perhaps from the desire of the Church to give the great number of its unbaptized converts a full view of the altar while still markedly excluding them from all part in the service. But there is also something to be said for the conjecture that when called upon to organize public worship on a large scale, Christianity took for its model a type of building already used for the purpose—the Isiac church, in which a distinctive clergy and a mixed congregation assembled for the performance of an established liturgy.

An alternative hypothesis, more acceptable perhaps to Christian feeling and capable of support from passages in the Acts, is that the Christian basilica was derived not from the Isiac church but from the Jewish synagogue. There was a great Jewish community at Alexandria and a description of its principal synagogue has come down to us. It was a building of great size and magnificence and was undoubtedly a basilica, though the details of its proportions are uncertain. But Alexandria is not Rome. There was, indeed, a Jewish community in Rome and it had a synagogue, not on the site of the present building but across the river. There is, however, no reason to believe that the early Christian community at Rome was composed mainly or even largely of Jewish converts. Such evidence as is available points rather the other way. St. Paul's allusion to Caesar's household and the fact, which appears indubitable, that members

of the ruling Flavian house were converted in the sub-Apostolic age, suggests that Christianity found its early adherents among Greeks rather than Jews. It is noteworthy too that the earliest language of the Church was Greek, not Aramaic.

These guesses, for after all they are nothing more, at least point to the importance of the fact that the word basilica is not a Christian invention, but had a long history behind it when Christianity first took it over. What, then, was a basilica? Vitruvius has described the structure in the practical architects' manual, which he wrote in the time of Augustus, but the term is older than Vitruvius The name appears to originate in a porch or colonnade at Athens in which the *archon basileus* transacted his business, but the *stoa basileios* or *basilike*, as it was called, was not a basilica as Vitruvius understood the term. It had no roof, and the essence of a basilica was that it was roofed. This important development took place in Hellenistic times. Sculptures and basreliefs are evidence that in the period between Alexander and Augustus, Greek art went on developing on magnificent and luxurious lines. One of its developments was the roofed basilica. No vestige survives of any of the great Hellenistic cities of Europe, Asia, or Africa, and only a guess is possible as to the way in which a quadrangular Greek portico was transformed into a roofed building. But the method that must have been adopted readily suggests itself. The colonnade consisted of a double row of columns. If a second set of columns were placed on top of the inner row, they would support the beams of the roof. Head covering would thus be provided; it remained to cover the sides. An obvious way would be to fill in the intervals between the upper rows of columns with windows of talc or perforated marble. A refinement would fill in only the upper portion of

this space, below which would start a lean-to roof sloping down to rest on the outer row of columns. This arrangement would provide the basilica with galleries over its aisles.

Such a structure with galleries and doubled columns is described by Vitruvius as a typical basilica. Its rapid development into a type need occasion no surprise. When once the idea of roofing the whole colonnaded area had occurred to an architect, this was the cheapest and best method of carrying it out, since vaulting—the method which suggested itself to later builders—involves the idea of a supporting wall, whereas Greek architects thought in terms not of walls but of pillars. On the other hand, scattered about the Roman Empire from Silchester to Timgad are the remains of numerous buildings which are correctly called basilicas, but which do not strictly conform to the Vitruvian pattern. It appears, therefore, that quite early in the Empire the type had begun to display variations, and this too need occasion no surprise, since Rome's first basilica was built two centuries before Vitruvius' day. But the problem of defining what a basilica meant when the Christians first began to use the term is clearly complicated by the fact that it had already undergone considerable extension of meaning. In fact, there is one passage in which it is used in a general sense by Vitruvius himself. Still, extensions of meaning are not given without cause, and the suggestion has therefore been made that since the basilica was the earliest type of large building known to the Romans, any large building came to be described as a basilica.

The principal item of evidence brought forward in support of this view is an inscription found in Britain about a man who *basilicam equestrem exercitatoriam aedificavit.* These words can only mean that he built a military riding school. But a riding school would

naturally take the form of a basilica, the spaces in the aisles serving as stalls for the horses and the central nave as the riding ground, so that this piece of evidence so far from proving that a basilica could mean any large building suggests the exact opposite.

Can it be contended, then, that a building was called a basilica provided it possessed the essential characteristic of the type, a roof resting on columns? Unfortunately the facts forbid. There were rooms in private houses which were called basilicas, and the term cannot be explained by reference either to their size or to their structure. But it can be explained by reference to their use. It appears that these rooms were halls of audience, and that they were called basilicas because they were places of assembly. When it is remembered that the earliest Roman basilicas were built just off the Forum to relieve the congestion of business-folk, this extension of the term's meaning becomes not only intelligible but natural. Moreover, if basilica means no more than assembly room, its use to signify a place of worship is at once explained, and no further difficulty attends its application to certain very small churches consisting of a nave only, such as the original church of S. Maria in Cosmedin (half the nave of the present building), and the tiny painted church beneath the present S. Saba. Indeed, this application of the name can be carried back to days when Christianity as yet possessed no churches as such. In the Conservatori Museum are two pieces of mosaic which, judging from their size, were laid on the floor of a room of no very great dimensions. One has in its centre an eye pierced by a spear, surrounded by other mysterious emblems. The other contains words of greeting to those entering the basilica. This room, then, was intended for mystical devotions and was called a basilica. It follows that

the term could be applied to the rooms in private houses set apart for Christian worship.

Cardinal Wiseman was of opinion that such rooms served to house whatever Christian gatherings were possible above ground before the Constantinian peace, and the facts as they were known in his day pointed to this conclusion. But it is now certain that the practices of the apostolic age were not maintained without substantial change until the fourth century. The great archaeologist de Rossi, to whom is due almost all our knowledge of early Christianity in Rome, was the first to call attention to the main difficulty involved in the theory. If the Christians were for two and a half centuries a proscribed body meeting by stealth in little gatherings at private houses, how account for the catacombs? The catacombs were enormous, and it is incredible that the Roman police, assumed to be furnished with instructions to suppress Christianity, should have been ignorant of their locality and purpose.

Evidence has nevertheless been called in support of this theory, fantastic though it appears. Modern explorers of the catacombs have come across entrances carefully masked by sandpits and evidently intended to escape detection. These secret entrances, however, belong to the last and most virulent persecution under Diocletian, when a tremendous effort was made to extirpate the faith and when Christian property was declared confiscated. The older entrances were conspicuous enough, and moreover the catacombs occupy definite sites in what was notoriously the principal cemetery of ancient Rome—the ground adjoining the Appian Way. These burial places must have been registered in proper form and cannot well have been registered as anything except what they were. Now the early Empire set its face strongly against unions

and associations, particularly in the capital, partly from a fear of political secret societies, partly because Rome with its mixed, idle population was a difficult place to keep in order. An exception was made, however, in favour of burial clubs. Towards the end of the Republic the average Roman began to display an increasing concern about his grave, his attitude being the first outward symptom of the great spiritual movement which in the end Christianized the Empire. He was not yet dissatisfied with this life and was still far from seeking compensation for his disappointments in visions of a brighter hereafter. On the contrary, he shrank from the sapless immortality which was all that orthodox Greek thought had to offer him, and was intensely anxious that his memory should be kept green in the world below. Hence his choice of burial grounds beside the great roads where living men must needs pass near him, hence his appeal to travellers on his tombstone, his plea for a moment's thought, his curse on whomsoever might disturb his ashes, his institution of annual feasts at his grave. It would have been most repugnant to public sentiment if the Imperial police had interfered with the steps which poor men—slaves and petty tradespeople and the like—chose to take in order to secure proper burial. Accordingly funeral clubs sprang up in such great numbers and variety that a study of them constitutes an important chapter in any account of social life during the first two centuries. With these facts in his mind de Rossi suggested that the early Church was officially recognized as a burial club. As such it could make undisturbed use of its catacombs, until the persecutions entered on their last uncompromising phase and any and every manifestation of the faith fell under the ban.

It is always unwise to contradict de Rossi. His knowledge was so profound and his instinct so certain

that subsequent discovery has often verified his conjectures. But his view is open to two objections. The first is that before the second century was out the Church must have numbered its adherents by scores of thousands, and there is no parallel for a burial club of such a size. This difficulty is to some extent overcome if, as is possibly the case, the Church formed not one burial club but several, different catacombs being assigned to the different local centres. A more serious objection is that de Rossi's theory does not go quite far enough, does not adequately represent the status of the Church in the third century, when mystical ideas had become orthodox and when Christianity certainly profited by the change in the tone of official thought. In the reign of Alexander Severus (222–35) an interesting arbitration case came before the Emperor's court. The Christians and the licensed victuallers disputed the ownership of a piece of land, and the Emperor, as his biographer records, adjudicated in favour of the Christians on the ground that they would put the land to better use. The natural sense of this judgment is that the Emperor preferred to see a church rather than a public-house built upon the site, and the tradition of the Church itself confirms the view that it had its own buildings in Rome at a very early date. As the numbers of Christians increased, it obviously became impossible for the whole community to receive the Eucharist at the same place, and it became necessary to establish local centres of worship. Their establishment marks the beginning of the formal organization of Christian worship and is the germ of all Church history.

Unfortunately the facts are obscured by the mists of tradition. Our main authority is the *Liber Pontificalis*, a series of biographical particulars of the Popes, which was continued for centuries after its first compilation.

The date of our present text is uncertain, but it is known to be a second edition, and there is no evidence to carry the date of the first edition back beyond Gothic times, say A.D. 530. On the other hand, its matter is drawn from official documents, and the archives of the Church went back to a very early date. Irenaeus, who wrote towards the end of the second century, gives a list of the Bishops of Rome from St. Peter to his own day, and it is improbable that he derived this list from a merely oral tradition. On the whole it seems safe to say that the *Liber Pontificalis*, which has been edited in recent times both by Duchesne and by Mommsen, is a revision of a book published in the sixth century to satisfy public curiosity as to Church origins, and that this book was based on official records, including such documents as had survived the great persecution. It follows that there is a presumption in favour of the statements of the *Liber Pontificalis* as to events after the Constantinian peace, when the Church was left free to organize itself publicly, but that its assertions concerning the first three centuries demand a critical scrutiny which must become more and more severe as the narrative progresses back towards Apostolic times.

The *Liber Pontificalis* states that after the peace the Church was organized round local centres of worship ; that these centres numbered 25 ; that they were called " tituli " ; and that most of them were founded by early fourth-century Popes. The question thus arises whether this system was a new departure or a return to old arrangements disturbed by the great persecution ; and the evidence is strong enough to make the latter alternative reasonably certain. It is stated of Pope Marcellus that he established 25 tituli in Rome to serve as centres for the baptism of the many converts from paganism, for acts of penitence, and for the burial of

martyrs.[1] Marcellus was elected Pope in 308 and ruled the Church for nearly two years. During his term the persecution continued but had lost its virulence, and it was possible to set about the work of reorganization. But it was in the highest degree unlikely that, with a renewal of persecution threatened, Marcellus should set about preparing a new scheme of organization. His natural policy would be to restore as well as he could the system which the persecution had destroyed. The statement with regard to his action may be taken as sound. His date falls so shortly before the great peace that a clear recollection of his work would have survived to be recorded in the written archives which the Church began to maintain as soon as the day of safety came.

It follows that the *Liber Pontificalis* carries the establishment of the tituli back not merely to the decade before the peace but to an earlier generation. A hint of their existence is given in the record of Pope Fabianus (236–50), of whom it is said that he assigned districts to the deacons.[2] The inference is that these districts had previously been in charge of priests, and that the deacons had worked throughout Rome as required without any regional limitation of function. There is yet one more notice which embodies something more than a vague tradition. Pope Urbanus, whose date is prior to 230, is stated to have made offerings of church plate,[3] and though the text is corrupt the mere fact that details are given shows that some early

[1] "XXV titulos in urbe Roma constitit quasi dioeceses propter baptismum et poenitentiam multorum qui convertabantur paganis et propter sepulturas martyrum." The words "multorum qui convertabantur paganis" were evidently inserted in the second edition to explain baptismum, and have wrongly been placed after poenitentiam (Duchesne, i. 164).

[2] Hic regiones dividit diaconibus (Duchesne i. 143).

[3] Hic fecit ministeria sacrata omnia argentea et patenas argenteas XXV posuit (Duchesne i. 143).

inventory was laid under contribution. It is significant that the number of pieces offered is 25, that is one for each title. Finally, a sense of the extreme antiquity of the system is expressed by two phrases which carry back its origins to Apostolic times. Evaristus, who was Pope under Domitian and Nerva, is reported to have assigned titles to his priests,[1] while the ordination of the 25 priests themselves is ascribed to the third Pope, Cletus or Anacletus, acting under the orders of St. Peter himself.[2]

These statements simply mean that the titular organization was believed to be older than any written record. That the belief was well founded may be inferred from the fact that no credible tradition survives as to the origin of the name "titulus." An explanation is given whose far-fetched ingenuity betrays its mediaeval origin. It is stated that orders were issued for the altars in the local centres to be made of stone, although the altar on which St. Peter himself had celebrated was of wood. Hence the centres themselves were called titles (tituli) in reminiscence of the passage in Genesis (xxviii. 17, 18) where Jacob, after his vision of the angel at Luz, took the stone on which he had slept and "set it up for a title, pouring oil on the top of it."

Obviously, however, this derivation is no more than an acknowledgment of the difficulty presented by the word titulus. The use of stone altars is sufficiently accounted for by the Christian habit of celebrating the Eucharist on the tombstone of a martyr, a usage which reflects the sense, strong in the early Church and magnificently expressed by St. Paul, of a triumph over death so complete that living and dead were felt to

[1] Hic titulos in urbe Roma dividit presbiteris (Duchesne i. 126).
[2] Hic ex precepto beati Petri XXV presbiteros ordinavit in urbe Roma (Duchesne i. 122).

be members of the same community. As to the echo of Genesis, there was no Latin translation of the Pentateuch at the date to which tradition assigns the establishment of "titles," and it could not be assumed that the στήλην of the Septuagint, which the Revised Version correctly renders by "pillar," would be transliterated rather than translated by the "titulus" of the Vulgate.

As to the actual significance of the word when the Church first began to use it, ignorance of Latin as it was commonly spoken in the second and third centuries makes cautious statement desirable. But "titulus" certainly meant an inscription, and in an age in which the inscribed stone took the place of the modern printed page this may well have been its ordinary sense. But why should a building which was, in fact, a church, be described as an inscription? At any rate, it could not be described by its true name. Even in periods of toleration Christianity was officially proscribed, and it would have been impossible for a place set apart for the administration of Holy Communion to announce its actual purpose. Some colourless word was required, the true meaning of which would be clear to Christians alone. A slight modification of de Rossi's theory would explain how the word "titulus" came to be chosen. If, as seems certain, Christian burial was legal, and if, as is probable, each catacomb was assigned to a particular district, there might easily have existed in each district a building which proclaimed itself to be the Latin equivalent of the registered offices of the local Christian burial club, but, in fact, served also as the centre of the local Christian worship. The further, not unreasonable, assumption that members of the community described the building, with significant allusiveness, by reference to the inscription which meant one thing to the world and another to themselves,

would account for the special technical colour of the word in Christian speech.

Be this as it may, it is at least certain that the Church, in the first stage of its organization, established local centres in different parts of Rome, that these centres were not churches as the later Church understood the word, for when churches were built they were called by a different name, that they were not simply rooms lent in private houses because they had a special name of their own, that this special name was "titulus," and that they were managed by clergy, one of whom was superior to his colleagues. This head of the titulus was the cardinal, the hinge on which the whole ecclesiastical organization swung, and the subsequent fortunes of the name illustrate both the immense development of the Church and its tenacious attachment to its origins. To this day a cardinal, though the field of his activities be across the Alps or across the ocean, possesses his titular church in Rome to remind him that if his office be traced back to its beginnings, he is something not very different from a parish priest.

The bearings of all this on the origins of the Christian basilica is that it reverses Cardinal Wiseman's theory. The catacomb church is no longer the first place of Christian worship but a temporary expedient, adopted in the agony of the later persecutions, and architecturally speaking is a modfication of a type of building already in use above ground to meet the special conditions of the catacombs. More recent speculation as to the origin of the basilica type has therefore been concerned with the familiar structures of everyday life. Professor Baldwin Brown, whose book *From Schola to Cathedral* is full of stimulating ideas, would derive the basilica from a lecture-room, such as that belonging to Tyrannus in which St. Paul taught at Ephesus after disturbances had forced him to abandon more public

places (Acts xix. 9). Such a room would naturally contain an apse, the dais on which the lecturer stood, and Christian basilicas were invariably apsidal, whereas pagan basilicas were not. (There is no apse, for example, in either of the basilicas that flank the Forum.) If the early Christian church consisted of nave and apse only, Professor Baldwin Brown's theory would be entirely satisfactory. But the early church was aisled, and it is impossible to evolve colonnaded aisles out of a lecture-room.

On the other hand, the ground plan of the basilica is similar to that of the peristyle in the typical Pompeian house, and as private houses were undoubtedly used for Christian worship it has also been suggested that a basilica is nothing but a house transformed. In defence of this theory it may be urged that the orthodox basilica had an atrium in front of it, so that the church does actually take the place of the peristyle in a house. A difficulty is, however, presented by the roof. The peristyle was open and the rooms were built round it to the height of two or more stories. Domestic architecture thus developed on lines exactly opposite to those of the basilica. It increased the height of the sides, so that Christian architects with houses on their minds would not naturally have abandoned the galleries over the aisles or carried up the inside wall to form a clerestory.

But in spite of these objections both the lecture-room theory and the house theory contain elements of truth. The former accounts for the apse and the latter for the general ground plan, and both explain why the upper part of the nave takes the form of a wall and not, as in classical basilicas, of a second row of pillars. Moreover, both theories illustrate the way in which the Church in its search for a type of building suited to its special needs, borrowed appropriate charac-

teristics from any available source, and both thus call attention to the risk of attempting to give the Christian basilica a single, definite line of descent. They concern themselves too much with the origin of features which were exclusively Christian, press their conclusions too far, and overlook the fact that when Christian architects took over the basilica type it was already busy exploring its own variations, and therefore already full of hints of possible lines of development. This neglect of the pagan basilica is perhaps due to a reaction from the once orthodox view that Christian basilicas took their name from the pagan buildings which were handed over to the Church by Constantine. Such an idea is of course quite unhistorical. The principal basilicas in Rome were law-courts, and continued to be used for judicial business long after the first great Christian basilicas had been built. But exploded though the notion is, it nevertheless contains a germ of truth in its reminder that the basilica had a long pre-Christian tradition behind it, which Christianity inherited along with the rest of the old civilization, preserving such parts of it as were of use.

The result of this inquiry has been to take the origins of the basilica out of the actual catacombs and to place them in the catacombs of speculation. Elements have been traced back outside Christianity to Attic porticoes and Hellenistic buildings, to Isiac temples and Jewish synagogues, to Syrian lecture-rooms and Roman houses. The last step of all is down into the literal catacombs again. In 1917 there was made in Rome a discovery which would have caused a sensation had not men's minds then been pre-occupied with matters alien to archaeology. From Rome's railway station two main lines of railway are carried together on an embankment until they are out of the city and free to turn, the one southward to Naples, the other northward to Pisa and beyond. The fact that the war was raging when

a small landslide occurred on this embankment led to a thorough investigation of its causes, and the earth was found to be slipping through a hole which led into an underground basilica. It has now been made visible by electric light and accessible by an entrance in the Via Palestrina.

Though underground when originally built, the basilica maintains all the characteristics of the type. A sloping passage led down into a little entrance hall, which opened into the main building, with a nave separated from the aisles and ending in an apse. The concrete under the plaster has been examined and found to be of the purest quality, so that the building evidently belongs to the early Empire. Other considerations of a technical character make it probable that it was built not later than Claudius' reign. It is thus the earliest perfect basilica in existence and is the prototype of the churches built in Rome for the next thirteen hundred years. The decorations are of a highly mystical character and may safely be interpreted as bearing on the experiences of the soul after death. The name of the cult is, however, unknown, but the subjects of the motives make it clear it was Greek, not Oriental. In the latest revealed of her secrets Rome maintains all her old irony, and in the form of art where Asiatic influences might confidently be expected, offers nothing that is not European. As the visitor stands 50 feet below ground in this profoundly impressive place, emphatically pagan yet full of anticipations of Christianity and presenting its unsolved riddles of mysterious speculations into the mysteries of life, he hears the trains rumble in and out of Rome above his head, while his eyes pick out the well-known figures of Greek mythology, buried deep and strangely allegorized, yet still having about them something of that free perfection of humanity in the sunshine which only Greek art could render.

CHAPTER VIII

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BASILICA

Architectural features—Influence of the altar—Structural developments—Rival designs—The transept—Persistence of the basilican type—S. Maria sopra Minerva—The atrium—Christian use of colour—Treatment of floors and walls—Significance of apse mosaic—Development of subject—The classical mosaics—Effect of Christian feeling—Byzantine influences—Mediaeval conceptions—Decline and revival—Pietro Cavallini—The decorative craftsmen—Their pillars and cloisters—The Lateran apse—Evolution of the dome—The Renaissance attitude—Jesuit churches.

THE basilica as it first appears in the full light of Christian history is an oblong building consisting of a nave flanked by one or two aisles and terminated by an apse.[1] The walls of the nave rest on columns and support an open timber roof. Abundant light is admitted through windows in the clerestory above the lower aisle roofs. The weakness of the walls forbad any thought of vaulting, and the basilica is a flimsy structure as compared with a Gothic cathedral. Architecturally, however, it is a bold conception, and could only be carried out by builders who were sure of themselves. There is no frank admission of stresses, no attempt to carry them off through walls feet thick, or by an elaborate arrangement of flying buttresses. The weight is borne directly and obviously by pillars, themselves elegant in virtue of

[1] The great antiquity and splendid associations of the word have led the Church to employ it as a title of honour. So Benedict XV, for example, recently conferred it on S. Maria degli Angeli. Thus used, the term is, of course, devoid of any architectural significance.

their smallness. The basilica gets it effect not from audacious prodigality of material, but from wisely calculated economy in its use. Its whole artifice is to be solid and to look frail. If only the pillars were firmly set on their foundations it might last for ever. The pillars themselves were looted more or less at haphazard from older buildings, as were often the architraves also, but the material was put together by men who knew their business. S. Maria Maggiore, for example, is a first-class piece of work, as good as the day it was put up. It has proved a success because it satisfied the one essential condition of basilica building —that the pillars should be well and truly laid. If this condition was wanting, the whole structure was radically unsound, and was bound to collapse sooner or later. This is what happened in old St. Peter's. The pillars of the south side were not properly laid. The foundations gradually gave way and the whole basilica began to slant to the left. Repair was out of the question. There was nothing for it but to pull the church down before it collapsed. It might indeed have been possible to pick it to pieces carefully and to re-erect it on a new foundation, and this course would doubtless be adopted nowadays. But the Renaissance, full of enthusiasm for its own architectural powers, preferred to erect a new cathedral.

In the early basilica there was but one distinctively Christian feature—the altar, and the altar accordingly comes to dominate and govern the whole building. The orientation of early churches, for example, is almost casual. It could not be otherwise, for the church had to be built about the altar, and the altar being by preference a martyr's grave was necessarily fixed. Its relation to the church was fixed also, for the requirements of worship made it essential for the altar to lie between the nave and the apse. It was left for the

configuration of the ground to determine in which direction the apse should point. The case of S. Paolo is peculiarly instructive in this regard. St. Paul was buried just off the road to Ostia at a point where there is only a narrow strip of ground between the hill and the river. The first church erected had its entrance on the road, and its apse towards the river, and was thus, though perhaps by accident, correctly oriented. But before the fourth century was out the church had become too small to accommodate the crowds of worshippers at the Apostle's grave. It was, however, impossible to lengthen the nave. The road was in the way. It was therefore decided to turn the church right round, replacing the old nave by the new apse and letting the new nave spread itself comfortably towards the river, and the orientation of the church was thus reversed. St. Peter's is another example of a western orientation (if the contradiction in terms be permitted) necessarily imposed by the nature of the ground.

Internally the influence of the altar was equally powerful. Accommodation was required in its neighbourhood for the officiating priest and his assistants. The apse precisely met the need, and thus became an indispensable part of the basilica instead of the optional feature that it had been hitherto. Moreover, it was undesirable that there should be any interruption either between apse and altar, or between altar and nave. Accordingly the line of columns which in secular basilicas and in Jewish synagogues had been carried right round the building was broken off at the altar end. The effect was to give unity to the whole structure of nave and apse together, the very quality which had been wanting in pagan examples. Used as they were for law-courts, several of which might be sitting simultaneously, they gained if one part, the apse,

could conveniently be more or less shut off from the rest of the building, and a fragment of the *Forma Urbis* (a large-scale plan of Rome made in Imperial times) shows that the apses of the Basilica Ulpia were in effect separate architectural features.

There were great possibilities about this device. Fine effects can be obtained by vistas through a screen of pillars, as Christian architects came to realize at Ravenna, and still more at Constantinople. But at first the movement was the other way. The Church desired to express in its buildings its sense of the unity of its members in Christ. It was probably under the influence of this idea that galleries were abolished in Roman basilicas, as tending to suggest distinctions between a higher and a lower. At any rate, such a line of reasoning is quite in harmony with the stiff Roman logic, and where galleries occur in Rome, as in S. Lorenzo and S. Agnese, and formerly in S. Maria in Cosmedin, their construction seems due to Greek influence. This same sense of unity caused the whole church to be centred on the altar, and swept away all obstacles to its view. St. Peter's is, however, an exception. Because the tomb had been a shrine before the church was built, or because of its special sanctity, or because an Emperor's gifts could not be rejected, the tomb and apse were cut off from the rest of the church by a line of six pillars (afterwards doubled in number) presented by Constantine himself. The pillars were, however, different in shape from those of the nave and served no structural function. Their existence helps to account for the iconostasis in Greek churches.

Symbolism may also serve to explain another feature of the Christian basilica, the tendency to increase the number of its columns. It would have been unfitting for individual columns to be sufficiently prominent to

attract attention. Moreover, ranged as they were on either side of the altar, the columns suggested the reverent upstanding souls of believers, and the greater their number the more did they emphasize the universality of the Church. But allowance must also be made for a purely material consideration. The stability of the basilica depended on the strength of its architraves, and these were none too easily come by. S. Lorenzo shows how indifferent Christian builders were to the appearance of the feature, provided it were strong enough to carry weight. But the closer the columns the lighter the superstructure on the architrave, and so long as columns could be looted in great numbers it seemed advisable to take plenty. Late in the Middle Ages, when columns had become scarce and architraves yet scarcer, an occasional pier was built to give the necessary strength, and this feature occurs in S. Clemente as re-erected after the Guiscard fire late in the eleventh century.

This departure from the type was exceptional, but the shortage of architraves led to a more significant variation. If solid blocks of stone or marble were unavailable and the whole superstructure had to be carried out in brick, the architrave was necessarily replaced by the archivolt. S. Sabina is the most striking example of the change, and S. Sabina shows how little feeling there was for the nature and possibilities of the arch. A glance shows that the curve is no more than a substitute, imposed by necessity, for the beam—an alternative means of supporting an entablature and cornice. True, its use breaks the strong vertical line of the church above the columns, but between this sacrifice to necessity and the Northerners' deliberate search for horizontal lines, there is a great gulf in architectural thought. It was a gulf which was never bridged in Rome. In the twelfth

century the "tricks" of Gothic work had become familiar in Rome and had begun to be used in windows, tombs, and ciboria. But the classical tradition was still strong. The ciborium of S. Lorenzo, which dates from this period, has not a curve in it. Its design shows a touch of mediaeval fantasy, but its structure is Hellenic. It is composed of pillars supporting architraves in strict accordance with orthodox principle.

Indeed, the most significant feature of Roman basilicas is their uniformity. The type persisted without essential modification until the Renaissance, so that S. Clemente, in spite of its date, is in some respects the best example of a basilica in Rome. Probably it was because it brought clergy, altar, and people into a relation congenial to Roman feeling for orderly and distinctive arrangement that the oblong apsidal form triumphed over the rival cruciform and circular designs. The Empress Helena's discovery of the True Cross led to the erection of cruciform churches, notably the mausoleum of Galla Placidia at Ravenna, in anticipation of what later became the orthodox tradition; but the arrangement had the drawback of hiding part of the congregation from one another, and thus ran counter to the desire for visible unity. A circular church, again, had the advantage of concentrating attention on its centre, and was therefore appropriately used for tomb chapels. S. Costanza is a case in point. But the circular church was unsuitable for general Christian worship, since it failed to give sufficient prominence to the clergy. S. Stefano Rotondo is, indeed, a striking example of the use of the circular design on a large scale, but this puzzling building seems to have been of secular origin, and to have been converted to Christian purposes. As for the kindred octagonal form, the example of the Lateran made it orthodox for baptisteries, but also confined it to them.

These exceptions apart, Roman basilicas adhered to type with an obstinacy which is unparalleled elsewhere in Italy, and which in part reflects the peculiar stolidity of the Roman character. The Romans are the most conservatively minded people in history. Nothing is so hateful to them as a revolution. Their Republic was conceived as modifying the forms of the monarchy, their Empire maintained the façade of the Republic, and the present capital of Italy still accommodates the sovereign Pontiff. It is her gift for smoothing away the rough edges of change that makes Rome the Eternal City. Her Christian architecture reflects her quality. In the fourth century the Popes received the basilica from Constantine. They maintained it for one thousand years, and only abandoned it to give fresh development to architectural methods practised under the Emperors of the first and second centuries. In the North the Renaissance broke a tradition; in Rome it revived it.

These considerations give special interest to the one great novelty which the Church introduced into basilica construction. The transept was a Christian invention, and though far from universal it was introduced into the two great basilicas, St. Peter's and St. Paul's, and may fairly be regarded as a feature of the standard Christian type. This innovation, too, was brought about by the altar. At first the apse provided room enough for the celebrants. But in course of time the number of clergy increased and a choir was added. Still later the size of the altar increased as relics were accumulated beneath it. More space was accordingly required in the neighbourhood of the altar, and the most obvious means was for the clergy and choir to expand into the nave. In monastic churches provision was made in this way, and a screened choir fills part of the nave in S. Clemente, S. Sabina, and S. Maria in

Cosmedin, and almost the whole of it in S. Maria Antica. In the great congregational churches, however, the nave could not thus be encroached upon, and Northern builders, when faced with the same problem, solved it by prolonging the nave beyond the crossing. An extension of the apse, however, would have pushed the bishop too far back from the altar, and it was probably on this account rather than from any technical inability to construct an enlarged apsidal semi-dome that the Roman builders sought another solution. They expanded sideways, inserting a strip, as it were, across the church between the apse and the nave. Had the transept been carried out on either side beyond the width of the aisles, the church would have received a cruciform shape. But such projection was not usual, and its occurrence in old St. Peter's was doubtless due to the need of accommodating an exceptionally large number of clergy and not to the deliberate choice of a symbolic form.

Two circumstances make it clear that the transept was regarded not as a cross-piece to the nave, but as an expansion of the apse. In the first place when the apse is raised, the transept is raised with it, as in the Lateran. In the second place an architectural device was adopted to part the transept from the nave and to unite it with the rest of the altar area. At its junction with the nave the apse formed an arch, and though there was not the least structural necessity for the repetition of this feature in the transept, the columns of the nave were returned and a second arch built from them right across the nave immediately in front of the altar. Architecturally this feature is most significant, since basilica builders disliked the arch and only used it under compulsion. But here ritual considerations caused its voluntary adoption. It had come to be felt that the apsidal arch framed the altar,

and when this effect was broken by the interposition of the transept a second arch was built and was styled the triumphal arch, with special reference to its purpose. Nothing could more clearly illustrate the overwhelming importance of the altar in Christian thought than its success in carrying its arch with it and thrusting, as it were, a difficult and irregular feature upon reluctant builders.

This is the paradox of the basilica. During the centuries when the Roman Church as an institution was developing from a struggling monotheistic faith into the most potent authority in the world, the Roman church as a building was almost stationary. In a thousand years it developed a transept and inserted an arch. Roman conservatism was in part responsible, but the main reason no development occurred was that development was neither possible nor necessary. It was impossible because the basilica when the Church took it over was already a finished type. It had solved with an elegance that was Greek and a thoroughness that was Roman, the problem of covering a space. The Northern builders had to feel their way to perfection by experiment. The Roman builders started with a perfected form. Moreover, an old civilization does not like experiments, and even in her worst mediaeval days Rome never quite forgot her traditions.

Besides, the stimulus of necessity was wanting. Buildings vary because they must, because the methods hitherto available will not give the effects desired. Roman architects were full of resource, and not the least interesting feature of Imperial administration is the skill with which local materials were laid under contribution for roads and aqueducts and buildings. Nor must it be supposed, though the error is still widely current, that the life gradually ebbed from Roman art during the third century. There was no feebleness

either in idea or method about the men who built the Baths of Diocletian and the Basilica of Constantine, and in the East architecture in particular continued to develop for centuries. There was St. Sophia, with its wonderful and most original treatment of the old problem of enclosing a space. There were the churches of Syria, where the scarcity of material led to the construction of pier arches. These were the buildings [1] which fired the imagination of the crusading Normans and stimulated them to erect the wonderful new churches which quickened the spirit of designers and craftsmen throughout Northern Europe. Even in Italy architectural enterprise asked for nothing but an opportunity, as Theodoric's Ravenna showed. But in Rome the opportunity was wanting. The type was satisfactory, the material abundant so long as there was any of the ancient city left to loot. An archivolt could be substituted for an architrave, a transept could be added when the apse overflowed. Otherwise there was nothing left for Roman architects to do. When S. Clemente was burned down and had to be rebuilt, it seemed entirely satisfactory to rebuild on the old lines and even to furnish the new church with the fittings of the old. Only the scale was diminished. The new church was made smaller by the width of an aisle, and though Rome's religious position was the only glory left her, she was content to admit, both in S. Clemente and in the Quattro Coronati not far off, that the scale of her old churches was beyond her shrunken aspirations. In this respect, too, the Roman Renaissance revived the past.

It is therefore quite off the point to account for the

[1] De Vogué observed the importance of these churches, photographs of which can be found in any illustrated history of architecture. A glance at them reinforces the melancholy truth that Europe was losing time all through the Middle Ages, and that the business of civilizing the barbarians broke off a chapter of progress until the Renaissance at last resumed it after a thousand years.

absence of Gothic in Rome by the familiar sectarian criticism that the Church was stupid and unenterprising Roman architects ignored Gothic because they did not want it, and maybe were quite right. At any rate, S. Maria sopra Minerva, the only Gothic church in Rome, well illustrates the dangers of fighting a tradition. There is nothing about this Dominican building to suggest that here was an art form which could satisfy the aspirations of Christendom and the fantasies of individual Christians more perfectly than any other ever devised. The Gothic idea fights a losing battle against the basilican tradition, and the church emerges as no more than a gothicized basilica. The ground plan is basilican, a broad nave flanked by narrow aisles. True, there are piers, but they are poor shrivelled things, no more than slightly ornate columns. True there are arches, but they are not allowed to soar upwards. The basilica, with its demand for a nice, clear, firm vertical line of cornice to give finish and regularity to the whole building swoops down and extinguishes them. They are not even granted the most elementary demand of arches, satisfactory vents for their thrusts. That meant buttresses and solid walls, things contrary to the practice of Roman masons, and these arches stand thanks only to the shameless and pettifogging use of tie-rods.

Again, Northern builders were naturally moved to cut holes in their great supporting walls and to admit light craftily and mysteriously. That, too, was not the Roman way. A basilica was lit serenely and classically through clerestory windows, and S. Maria sopra Minerva is lit as though it were a basilica, and is consequently the one dark church in Rome. Worst of all, it has been shorn of its façade. Seen from the street, S. Maria sopra Minerva has a wretched lathe-and-plaster looking front which would make a Gothic builder

shudder. The designer of a Northern cathedral was immensely concerned to impress the worshipper as he approached and entered the church. If he had nothing before his eyes except an oblong mass of stone with a triangular gable atop of it, his mind could not be occupied by becoming thoughts. Accordingly the utmost care was lavished on the front. It was flanked by towers, its central gable was concealed or heightened or decorated, the whole west front was set with niches for statues, and a Last Judgment was graven over the main portal. The Gothic façade had the utmost difficulty in establishing itself in Italy, and in Rome it never established itself at all. The Aracoeli façade is undecorated brick, like S. Lorenzo in Florence, and S. Maria sopra Minerva is a sort of whitewash, which is even worse.

The reason for this brutal outrage on Gothic feeling is that a basilica had no front. It did not stand on the public road visible to the worshipper from afar, but was veiled behind an approach of its own. The Roman of the early Middle Ages on his way to church passed through a postern in a blank wall, such an arched entrance as still survives at S. Clemente and S. Cosimato. He then found himself in a colonnaded or arcaded atrium with a fountain in the centre at which he could make the ablutions derived from Jewish ritual.[1] The basilica lay at the farther end of the atrium, and the fourth side of the portico cut straight across its front, which was thus deprived of architectural importance.[2]

Ritually this fourth side served an essential purpose.

[1] The most famous of these fountains stood in front of old St. Peter's. It was decorated with the peacocks and fir-cone, all apparently looted from Hadrian's tomb, which now stands in the Giardino della Pigna of the Vatican.

[2] S. Clemente possesses the only perfect quadri-porticoed atrium which still remains. Unfortunately this church is usually entered from the side.

Penitents and catechumens stood under it and watched the distribution of the Eucharist, which they could not themselves receive. Accordingly, when space forbade the construction of a whole atrium, this fourth side had to be maintained. The Greek method was to take it inside the church, where it formed the narthex, but there is no true example of this treatment in Rome, though S. Lorenzo in Damaso imitates its effect. Rome preferred to practise drastic architectural surgery. It did away with three sides of the atrium and left the fourth where it was. Examples are numerous; S. Lorenzo is perhaps the most striking. This arrangement broke up any view of the building as a whole, and gave the Renaissance, which was much concerned for the outward appearance of its creations, one good reason for abandoning the basilica form. Oddly enough, however, the traditional defect repeats itself in the most famous Renaissance building of them all. When the unfortunate decision was taken to convert St. Peter's into the form of a Latin cross, a façaded porch was affixed to the end of the lengthened nave with the result that the near view of the dome was smothered. The older builders accepted a smothered front as a matter of course, and even made a virtue of the fault by decorating the exposed upper portion with glowing mosaics, such as once illuminated the façade of old St. Peter's, or as survive behind the late Renaissance portal of S. Maria Maggiore, and may still be traced on S. Lorenzo, S. Maria in Trastevere, and S. Pudenziana.

The development of Christian artistic feeling, though it failed to modify the structure of the basilica, may be traced very clearly in the application of decorative colour. Even the initial use of it was a Christian innovation. There was, indeed, colour enough in the classical basilicas, panelled as they were with varied

shades of marble. But the classical attitude towards colour was the reverse of our own. Subjects were treated in stucco or in monochrome, and all the glitter which Rome could produce was thrown into their broad and gorgeous framing. In the later Empire there were signs of a change of taste. The orthodox treatment appeared flat and dull, and life was given to it by the use of high relief to produce effects of light and shade. Christianity, however, did more than develop the new tendency. It plunged at once into colour in a way which cultured taste of the fourth century must have regarded as vulgar. The plunge was deliberately taken. The basilica as Christianity adapted it was a pagan building full of a tranquil dignity which was in itself becoming enough, but quite without the cheerful, vigorous spirit which the Church cherished. Colour alone could impart the missing sense of gaiety and movement, the absence of which was the more felt because the basilica had none of the dim religious light which consorts so well with Gothic aspirations, but was flooded with Italian sunshine from above.

The brightest part of the basilica was the floor, and the floor was peculiarly suited to the use of colour on elementary and tentative lines. Artists still dispute over the proper relation of colour and form, but at the end of the classical period, when the treatment of form had been studied to the utmost while the treatment of colour had been subordinated to sculpture's needs, not the greatest genius could have triumphantly fused the two in the rendering of a figure subject. But the full effect of colour could be obtained at once if it were handled freely and boldly and for its own sake, with nothing but a pattern to set it off; and a pavement provided just for the occasion for such handling. Nowhere in the world are there such pave-

ments as in Rome. Few of them, indeed, are very early, for the wear and tear was necessarily heavy, but the Renaissance took over the idea from the mediaeval world, and the finest pavement of them all was laid down in the Lateran by Martin V early in the fifteenth century, the transitional epoch, when the new Florentine ideas were just begining to break through the crust of the old Roman tradition. Substantially the Lateran pavement could have been laid a thousand years earlier, for its governing theory, a contrast of colour emphasized by a formal contrast between circle and rectangle, was simple enough and admitted of little development. A patterned pavement in gay colours gave the right touch, and as the early Christians thus lightened their basilicas they may perhaps have felt that they were literally setting the splendours of the heathen world under their feet. This then, was the final end of Imperial magnificence. Its columns of porphyry and serpentine were sawn up to make slabs for the floors of churches.[1]

Colour was not confined to the floor. It appeared on the walls, and at a very early date there seems to have been a definite intention to fill the basilica with decoration until it looked self-consciously Christian. The metal work offered so abundantly during the Middle Ages has all vanished. It presented irresistible temptations to pillagers from the Saracens in 846 to the revolutionaries in 1798. But of the wall decorations enough survives to make clear what was aimed at. A picture is the way to impress a story on the unlettered mind ; the film is only the latest expression of a very ancient truth. The Church realized it so clearly that in the eighth century it broke with Constanti-

[1] The pavements of S. Lorenzo, S. Alessio, and S. Prassede contain fragments of inscriptions, but in general the Christians preferred their colour smooth and plain.

nople sooner than abandon its portrayal of the human figure. Its early pictorial record is very imperfect, but valuable hints are given by the three layers of frescoes in S. Maria Antica and by the remarkable narrative pictures in the lower basilica of S. Clemente. Fortunately, however, the Church also worked out its ideas in a more enduring material, and the apse mosaics of Roman basilicas are distributed throughout the centuries in most instructive array.[1]

The apse was the most important feature of the basilica so far as its congregation was concerned. There sat the celebrating priest with his subordinate clergy. Artistically, too, the apse was most conspicuous. The arch which formed it, being lower and narrower than the nave, caught the eye at once and held it because it broke the strong vertical lines of architrave and cornice. The attention of worshippers would thus be directed to whatever decoration filled the semi-dome behind it, and the moral of the decoration would be enforced by the presence of the clergy just below. It was natural therefore that Christianity put its most emphatic thought and its most elaborate work into the apse mosaics.[2] In fact the stimulus to development, wanting in architecture, was here present, and though the Church took over a finished tradition of mosaic work, it was prolific in versatile innovations.

[1] Happily, too, they admit of easy study. Except in S. Maria Maggiore, they are everywhere quite visible. Moreover, like everything else in early Christian Rome, they have been interpreted by de Rossi. Under the great archaeologist's direction they were reproduced in a series of splendid folio chromolithographs, whose issue extended over twenty-five years and was almost complete at de Rossi's death. The accompanying text in French and Italian is unfortunately and unnecessarily printed on paper the same size as the pictures, and the enormous volume is most inconvenient to read. The ground has recently been worked over again by Wilpert, whose monumental volumes also notice the wall paintings.

[2] Yet even here paganism showed the way. There has been discovered at Ostia and is now in the Lateran (Room 15) a little apsidal shrine of Silvanus with a mosaic of the god.

To begin with, a significant change was made in the position of mosaics. In the classical period they were used to decorate floors, but the Christians had other views as to the use of colour in floors, and removed their mosaics to the place of honour in the apse. The transfer at once increased the dignity of the art. Further, the classical mind thought of its mosaic rather in terms of pictures. A good floor had a small subject panel in the centre, and was surrounded by a strongly patterned border. It happened, however, that this was a form of art in which there were no examples of the best Greek period to set the standard, and the rather philistine tendencies of Roman taste were stimulated by the melodramatic products of Hellenistic mosaicists. The proper use of colour, argued the Roman vulgarian, was to imitate nature, and a dining-room floor was splendidly decorated when it looked as though real fish-heads and real bundles of asparagus had been dropped about on it. Such a delicate panel as the doves mosaic in the Capitoline Museum was very rare. This example came from Hadrian's Villa, and is evidence of the refinement of the Emperor's taste. Usually the figure subjects get their quality by a crude, rather flashy impressionism, and the prize-fighter mosaic from the Baths of Caracalla and the tiger-baiting mosaic in the Villa Borghese illustrate the degraded effects which this method could attain. The sacred character of the Christian subjects at once abolished all this ugliness.

Further, the earlier classical mosaics were executed in stone, and admitted only of a poor range of colours. Even the doves mosaic has to depend for its effect not on the power of the colours in themselves, but on the delicate gradations of their tones. But when taste began to lean towards colour and away from form, the mosaicists responded with an advance in technique.

The art of colouring glass was discovered and developed, and the work gained enormously in brilliance. Rome produced a fine deep blue for backgrounds, Constantinople achieved the more spectacular magnificence of gold, and mosaic developed a richness which paint could not rival, and which probably accounts for its choice as a material for apse decoration. For all these reasons, then, Christian mosaics admitted of a vitality and development impossible in architecture, and are worth consideration both in themselves and as part of the inheritance of the great Renaissance colourists.

The series opens with the blue on white mosaics in the ambulatory of S. Costanza, which were planned to set off the now vanished mosaic in the dome, and are therefore simply decorative, and are not Christian at all. Geometrical patterns predominate, and there is as yet no proper differentiation between the treatment of colour in pavements and in ceilings. One panel, however, almost achieves a figure subject. It is filled by a vine whose twisting tendrils make a pattern, and in the spaces are birds and genii gathering wine, just the little decorative refinements by which Imperial art sought to save its designs from monotony. It has been suggested that this panel is symbolical of the vintage of souls, but more probably the Christian artist selected a pagan subject which was suitable to a church because it was simple and cheerful and decent, and did not bother his head about an allegorical meaning. Later, however, the vine was certainly used symbolically. The best existing example is the apse mosaic in the portico of the Lateran baptistery—splendid gold arabesques on a blue ground. The original mosaic in the apse of S. Maria Maggiore was of about the same date and of similar character. Portions of it have been retained to give a setting to the figure subject which now fills the bulk of the apse.

As models of the handling of design to give effect to colour, these vine mosaics are unsurpassed. But they did not satisfy the religious sense of the fourth century. They were too abstract. They did not teach the living Christ. They were suitable for a quiet oratory where the professed Christian came to pray, but they did not fit the apse of a great basilica where they met the eyes of recent converts not quite clear what to make of the service. Feeling this, an unknown man of genius was inspired to think of Christ surrounded by the Apostles as the proper subject for an apse mosaic. In itself this clearly set out the central fact of Christianity and its position gave it a symbolical meaning. The convert looking from the living bishop and his clergy in the apse to the Redeemer and His disciples portrayed above their heads could not fail to see in the former the actual representatives of the latter.

The earliest treatment of the subject is in S. Pudenziana.[1] The mosaic has suffered much from injury—the two end Apostles perished when the apse was narrowed by the insertion of piers to carry the dome—and from restoration, particularly on the right side, where all the figures have been reworked ; but de Rossi believes that the oldest parts date back to the fourth century. The treatment is certainly still so classical that realism and allegory are curiously blended. Christ and the Apostles are represented as seated in a roofed portico with an architectural background. But while the Apostles are entirely human, Christ is nimbed and gorgeously enthroned, is, in fact, God who has come down to rule as King among men. Moreover, while the portico, with its roof of bronzed tiles, and the

[1] As Cardinal Wiseman, whose titular church it was, well says, this is the original cathedral of Rome. It is built on the site of the house of Pudens, the host, according to tradition, both of St. Peter and St. Paul. The present titular is Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster.

entrances between its pillars latticed like the door of the Pantheon, is almost photographically realistic, and while its background may quite well depict the churches built by Constantine in Jerusalem, the jewelled cross on the heavenly Golgotha belongs to the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse, and the symbols of the evangelists are set in no earthly sky. As to the two female figures behind the Apostles, their significance is doubtful. They have been taken for Saints Prassede and Pudenziana, and this view is possible since they are holding their crowns towards the Saviour and not placing them on the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul. But it is doubtful whether the fourth-century Church would have placed the daughters of Pudens in the same composition as the Apostles themselves, and the analogy of the mosaic in S. Sabina makes it more probable that the figures represent the Churches of the Gentiles and of the Circumcision. It is noteworthy that all the figures are presented as portraits, whereas the general rule in early Christian art is that only St. Peter and St. Paul have individualized features. Unfortunately restoration makes it impossible to determine whether there is any true relation between the faces of the Apostles in the mosaics and their familiar types in Renaissance pictures.

The mosaics in the triumphal arch of S. Paolo are only slightly later in date and are of special interest as exhibiting the old classic feeling that design mattered more than colour. The curve of an arch is not an easy space to fill, and Galla Placidia's artist could congratulate himself on having produced a design which most satisfactorily filled it—Christ over the centre with the twenty-four elders of the Apocalypse ranged on either side of Him. Anxious to make his design tell, the artist saw a way to achieve his end, while at the same time conforming to the new taste for colour.

The figures of St. Peter and St. Paul on the altar face of the arch had been done in colour on an orthodox Roman ground of blue. On the nave face, however, the ground is of gold, after the Greek manner.[1] Having thus secured a setting whose brilliance would of itself throw up the figures imposed upon it, the artist could afford to carry them out in the plain white; and the elements of the design were thus made properly subordinate to the design itself. The effect was worthy of the conception, was, indeed, so admirable, that the work served as a model some four centuries later when the old sense of design had utterly perished; and S. Prassede exhibits the wretched fate which then overtook the last manifestation of classical feeling in Christian art.[2]

The mosaic in SS. Cosma e Damiano dates from Theodoric and is therefore at least a century later than the work in S. Paolo In the interval the treatment of the S. Pudenziana subject has undergone a revolutionary change. All the realistic, pictorial accessories have disappeared. Christ is no longer the human figure who walked with the Apostles on the earth, but the awful Judge standing on high in the clouds. Any doubt which the worshipper might have as to the conception would be removed by the imagery of the Apocalypse—the Lamb and the sealed Book—on the face of the arch. This is the first of a series of representations of the Last Judgment, that terrible prospect which obsessed the mediaeval mind, and the fact that Roman mosaicists depicted it in the apses of basilicas, while French sculptors carved it over the portals of cathedrals, betrays an instructive difference in the temper of worship.

[1] In S. Pudenziana gold is only used for decorative detail.
[2] It should be borne in mind that only the arch mosaic of S. Paolo ancient. Its apse mosaic dates from the thirteenth century.

The composition is designed to bridge the gulf between the majestic Christ and the insignificant Christian. On either side the Redeemer are St. Peter and St. Paul, white-robed figures, little lower than the angels. They present the Arab physicians, Cosmas and Damian, human beings, indeed, but also saints. The whole is surrounded by an elaborate symbolical setting. Below Christ's feet roll the waters of Jordan, the river of baptism, underneath which is the nimbed Lamb flanked by the twelve Apostle lambs who issue from the gates of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The lambs on the left side, restorations of the late Renaissance, call attention to the fact that, as usual, the early Christian lambs are remarkably like wolves. It is worth noting that the treatment of animals, in which pagan craftsmen sometimes excelled, is never very satisfactory in Christian mosaics. On the other hand, the forceful, austere figures are handled in most masterly fashion. Their evolution from the repulsive prize-fighters of the Baths of Caracalla is a striking instance of the effect of Christian feeling upon technique.

Half a century later the Gothic monarchy had fallen and Byzantine influence prevailed in Rome. It is apparent in the mosaics on the arch of S. Lorenzo which date from the end of the sixth century, and in the figure of the saint in S. Agnese which is about a generation later. The feeling for composition, for a picture, has almost gone. Sacred beings must not be treated in so familiar a way. The figures are detached from one another and in S. Lorenzo the remoteness of Christ is again accentuated. Holding a cross, He sits upon the globe of the world. The use of the nimbus establishes a further visible difference between saints and the general run of mankind. Moreover, the spirit of Christianity has become ascetic. The figures are stiff and solemn, and it is just because of this new austerity

of treatment that it was felt reverent to substitute a representation of St. Agnes between two Popes for the conventional Christ flanked by Apostles. The new conception affected technique. These stately figures required to be magnificently clothed, and St. Agnes herself is the work of an artist who was well aware of the resources of his craft and evidently enjoyed their employment.

After the collapse of Byzantine rule and the establishment of the Frankish protectorate over Rome, the pendulum of thought again swung back to Western simplicity and gentleness. The mosaic in SS. Nereo ed Achilleo was executed under Pope Leo III and is therefore exactly contemporary with Charlemagne. It reflects the spirit of hope with which Rome hailed the new Augustus, and accordingly substitutes for the terrors of the Last Judgment the glory of the Transfiguration, a subject rarely attempted in early Christian art. The theme lays fresh emphasis upon the awful remoteness of Christ. Wearing a cruciform nimbus, He stands in an aureole of light. Moses and Elias naturally replace St. Peter and St. Paul, and it would appear from the fragments of the setting that the figures of the kneeling Apostles appropriately linked this exalted scene with mundane life. The abundant use of white in the execution, though justified by the subject, is also a reminder that technique had suffered by the breach with Constantinople.

The same use of human figures as a setting and the same reliance on white to throw up the colour scheme are apparent in the almost contemporary apse mosaic of S. Prassede. It is well preserved, and there is no piece of work in Rome which so well illustrates the mediaeval artist's view of the relation between central subject, setting and border. The grouping of brilliant colours together in the centre is certainly effective, but

the work as a whole is characteristic of the Carolingian age, which strained so hard after culture and somehow just missed it. Taking the work in S. Paolo for a model, the artist proposed to set off the colour in the apse by the use of white in the triumphal arch, but quite failed to perceive the problem of composition involved. Instead of setting himself to accommodate the figures of the elders to the broadening curve of the arch, he fell back on an infantile device. As the arch sweeps round, the arms of the elders are preposterously lengthened to fill the space.

Another mosaic, only a few years later, shows how rapidly the world went downhill after Charlemagne's death. The critics take malicious pleasure in noting the defects of the work in the apse of S. Marco. Dr. Frothingham comments on its poor colours, blurred tints, and effete lifeless types, and the dispassionate Baedeker approves of the verdict " utter caricatures." It is all a little too severe. The face of the Christ is not without a certain crude majesty, the blurring of the tints is due to the damp which has got in, and the gibe at the colours is rather unfair. But the artist was clearly not interested in his design, which is quite conventional. What he enjoyed was putting in big splashes of colour marked out by hard lines, and he would perhaps have been happier had he been commissioned to lay a pavement.

The art did not revive until after the Guiscard fire, when it entered on a new phase which was destined to lead clean beyond its old limits. The mosaic of the earlier Middle Ages is didactic and makes a religious appeal. The mosaic of the eleventh and twelfth centuries is decorative and makes an aesthetic appeal. As such it links up with the general arts of decorative design and decorative painting, incidentally completing the circle and returning to its origins before breaking

new ground. But it seems the rule of art to move in spirals.

S. Clemente holds the first mosaic made after the sack of 1088. It returns quite frankly to the fifth-century tradition of arabesque. The work is, however, highly self-conscious. The artist is at pains to show off his skill in detail, and it almost seems that he designed the arabesque in order to give himself the pleasure of working the Crucifixion scene, which is its central ornament. The whole pattern has affinities with the illuminated capital letters of contemporary missals. In the border the love of detail for its own sake gets out of control, and the banks of the rivers which spring from the fountain of life are crowded with little subject figures, animal and human, thrown in with all that delight in involved opulence which is a characteristic of later mediaeval work. This mosaic is, however, rather Northern than Latin in feeling. The Roman mind, with its bent towards clear and definite ideas, disliked this riot of fancy, and the mosaic in S. Francesca Romana shows how well it could subordinate decorative design to a general scheme. The figures are heavy and overdressed and may belong to an earlier period, but the way in which the whole design is broken up and rounded off by columns and arches and the palm-trees on either hand, is full of the decorative feeling of the twelfth century. The same feeling, working the reverse way, is shown in the apse mosaic of S. Maria Maggiore. There the design was ancient. Its centre part has been removed, the edges left neatly trimmed off, and the space filled with a decorative picture, a very gracious and tender piece of work, representing the Coronation of the Virgin. Both subject and treatment suggest Tuscan frescoes and break entirely with the traditional Last Judgment theme.

This remarkable development, really the death of

mosaic in giving birth to painting, was due to a great revolutionary artist, whose name has lately been rescued from obscurity. Pietro Cavallini is stated by Vasari to have worked as an assistant to Giotto. It appears, however, that late in the thirteenth century, when Giotto had scarcely grown up, Pietro Cavallini executed a series of mosaics for the lower part of the apse of S. Maria in Trastevere. The main mosaic had nothing to do with him and was finished a hundred and fifty years before his time. It has a certain transitional interest of its own, however. Here, too, the main subject is a Coronation of the Virgin, but the treatment is quite without the grace of the later work in S. Maria Maggiore. Apparently this mosaic lacked the customary border and Cavallini was commissioned to supply it. He decided to break away from the traditional symbolism and substituted a series of pictures illustrating the life of the Virgin. In fact he has rendered in mosaic the predella of an altar-piece and he, too, has set his figures

> against a background of bright gold,
> Such as the Tuscan early art prefers.

The work is wonderful, but as Giotto must have seen, it is a *tour de force*. It has been executed in the wrong medium. The figures, though admirably poised, are too heavy. Their attitudes are stiff, their faces dull. These defects were inevitable in work executed with so inelastic a material as mosaic. Giotto looked, saw that such ideas can only be rendered in paint, painted, and by his paintings exposed new vistas in art.

Here, then, is one branch of mosaic decoration brought to an end, or rather transplanted and bidden flourish more lustily in an ampler soil. Meanwhile, what has become of the other branch—the mosaic of decorative design? There befell it a remarkable transformation.

During the thirteenth century the practice of mosaic work was hereditary in certain families, especially the Cosmati and the Vassallecti, with the consequence that its character tended to harden, becoming less of an art and more of a craft. The experts knew how to make good mosaic cubes and how to set off effective colour contrasts, and with that knowledge were reasonably content. It seemed unnecessary to experiment in design when decoration was the important thing and there were so many objects waiting to be decorated. The ordinary furniture of a church—its ambones, its choir screen, its episcopal throne—would look so much brighter and better with a few lines or circles of red and black and gold mosaic, to give it a touch of decorative colour. The Renaissance did away with most of this work, which was of course quite alien to classical ideas, but surviving examples, particularly in S. Lorenzo and S. Maria in Cosmedin, adequately illustrate its intentions.

Further, when once the notion of lines of colour had established itself, it was combined with another artistic novelty, the use of Gothic ornament. So far as the main structure of the basilica was concerned, the Romans had no use for Gothic, either in principle or in detail—not in principle because the basilica was borne by pillars instead of by arches, and not in detail because Roman work brought its surfaces smoothly together to be adorned with paintings and mosaics, whereas Gothic work broke them up so that they might supply their own decoration. But the Roman artist could not be insensible to the scope which the Northern method gave for the fantastic invention so congenial to the mediaeval mind, and this aspect of Gothic received careful attention. Its advantages as a decorative medium were duly perceived, and when nothing but decoration was required it became popular. It was

used, for example, for ciboria in S. Paolo and in the Lateran, for tombs in S. Lorenzo, S. Maria sopra Minerva, and the Aracoeli, and for windows in numerous churches. This last adaptation annoyed the Renaissance, and the only basilica which still retains its Gothic windows is S. Marco. Doubtless they survived because they were simple. The fragmentary remains in the Lateran cloister and in the museum of S. Sabina show the full-blown character of the work that was swept away.

In influencing window-shapes, the new decorative fantasy had attacked the main structure, and the question suggested itself whether it could also be applied to the pillars. Not to the main pillars, of course ; but since Gothic made structure ornamental, why should not pillars be used as ornaments ? The idea was as old as the later Empire. Twisted pillars were frequently used to break up the fronts of sarcophagi, and a whole row of them screened the high altar of St. Peter's. But the new inspiration was mediaeval. Nothing classical could ever have suggested such fantastic contortions as those which flank the throne in the cloisters of the Lateran. They are the very spirit of Gothic grotesque. As such they are exceptions. The true Roman way was more restrained. It preferred to twist its pillars regularly and to give the required touch of fancy by adorning the twists with coloured mosaic. In the apse of S. Alessio are two such pillars, inscribed with the maker's name, Jacobus Cosmas. They are all that remain of a set of nineteen, which he made as a choir screen for S. Bartolomeo in Isola ; but the pair are enough to show how the Roman craftsman could turn his own structural principles to decorative use.

He handled the structural principal of Gothic in the same way. At the turn of the twelfth century St. Dominic and St. Francis brought about a great revival

of monastic life. It had its architectural consequences, for the monks demanded cloisters in which they could walk and meditate. In Rome the cloister would naturally have taken the form of a colonnade but for the insuperable difficulty that the supply of ancient pillars had given out. In their dilemma the builders bethought themselves of the Gothic arch. It lay just within their experience, and when handled on such a small scale, with none of the extravagant developments popular in the North, was by no means difficult to construct. Accordingly, the cloisters which sprang up in Rome between 1150 and 1250 are built of rounded arches. They are serene, comfortable places, reflecting the more genial side of papal power in its greatest days. S. Lorenzo, which is the earliest in date, is full of classical feeling and preserves a strong cornice over the remains of an upper story. It is also the simplest, and gets its peculiarly soothing effect from the warmth of its stone and the contrast with the garden which it surrounds. But the very smallness of the scale suggested decoration, and development came fast. The twisted pillar was brought out of the church, where it was an ornament, and used in the cloister to support the arches. It was doubled so as to avoid flimsiness, and its doubling stimulated further ingenuity in twists. With the pillars came the mosaics, and once outside they climbed on the face of the arches and blazoned them with glittering patterns of colour. It was a new triumph for the craftsman ; but it was the end of the church mosaic of decorative design.

The departure of the Popes to Avignon extinguished the art, and the Renaissance, which cared for form and not for colour, was hostile to its revival. But its products were too effective for it to be allowed to die out altogether, and the last chapter of its story is written in the apse of the Lateran. Here is a mosaic

indeed, for the work of centuries has been combined into one piece by craftsmen under the orders of Leo XIII. In the main, the central panel is from the hand of the same Torriti who worked in S. Maria Maggiore, but the figure of Christ is clearly centuries earlier, and much of the surrounding ornament is modern. But whoever cares to study the mosaic as a whole, and notes the human figures of saints grouped beneath the dignified aloofness of the Redeemer, and interprets the symbolism which runs riot in the jewelled cross and the New Jerusalem and the nimbed phoenix and the tree of life and the river of baptism in which all manner of living things slake their thirst, will understand how mediaevalism accomplished its task and set the overwhelming impress of Christianity on basilicas, every feature of which was originally pagan. He may also regret that the Renaissance had no use for it all; that in its zeal for a frontage it neglected the atrium; and that in its enthusiasm for arches and the single order of columns, it abandoned the pillar and the entablature it supported. He may even wonder whether some of the religion did not go out when the old classical principles came in again. But at least he will be thankful that the Renaissance did not seek to adapt the basilica to its own idea. The Lateran itself is an awful case of horrors generally avoided, with its noble pillars vulgarly swallowed up in stuccoed piers, and all the restfulness of its aisles spoiled by their vaulting. All Rome, and all the world for that matter, contains no more melancholy instance of a fine building marred.

There were, however, other elements of its mediaeval inheritance that the Renaissance developed with alacrity. The roofed basilica was not the only means of covering a space with which the ancients were familiar. The architects of the Empire, in particular, were greatly intrigued by the dome, of which they had doubtless

seen examples in the East, and after six centuries of experiment succeeded at last in solving the constructional problem involved. With their characteristic dislike of any work obviously tentative and incomplete, they began in a small way. A little room with a flat ceiling appeared stuffy, but the desired suggestion of comfortable spaciousness would be obtained if a dome took the ceiling's place, and the use of concrete, which would harden into a solid mass, did away with the initial structural difficulties. Small domed apartments are as old as the Empire. There are examples in Augustus' house on the Palatine, and the device evidently became popular, for domed buildings are represented on the sides of the best and earliest sarcophagi in the Lateran. The treatment was specially suitable to bathrooms, because the dome afforded a convenient vent for the escaping steam, and there can be little doubt that the Lateran baptistery was originally a bathroom in the palace which came to Constantine as part of his wife's dowry. Nothing remains of the original baptistery except its ground plan, for even the porphyry columns appear to be later; but the shape was taken as a model for baptisteries all over Italy. Mediaeval architects, however, made no attempt to crown their baptisteries with a domed roof. The eight walls were simply built inwards to a point as at Florence.

The mediaeval men thus evaded a problem which the classical men bravely faced. The natural shape of a room was square and the natural shape of a dome was circular, but how could a circle be set upon a square? The favourite way was to work in a shape intermediate between square and circle—an octagon for example. The dome, starting octagonally, could easily be "fudged"—"corbelled" is the architects' term—into a circle as it narrowed. That is why the Lateran

baptistery was octagonal, and that is why Roman domes were generally small. On a large scale the vagary in the shape of the dome would become too apparent. But the Roman architects were rightly dissatisfied with the limitation thus imposed upon them and tried to escape from it. One of their efforts is preserved in the building known as the Temple of Minerva Medica, which has ten sides instead of eight. But the logical conclusion of this process was the abandonment of sides, and the Pantheon is triumphant proof that it was possible to construct a successful circular building. There is little wonder that it gripped the imagination of later architects. The Pantheon, as they saw, was not the final development of the circular idea. The walls of the Pantheon are enormously thick, and niches flanked by pillars have been cut out of them. Now suppose the niches continued either way until they met, and suppose pillars set up in front at regular intervals. Then the main domed building becomes surrounded by a circular ambulatory, the form actually assumed in S. Costanza.

The Roman builders got no farther than this. It was left for the Greeks to discover that the Romans had wandered down an architectural blind alley, and to insist that the problem of putting a circular dome over a square space was in itself rational and must be capable of solution. The most natural line of experiment was to make the circle touch the square at the corners where two walls met, and where the support was consequently strongest. The circle would then bulge out beyond the centre of the square, but the walls of the square could be built up to the point where they would cut the circle, and the building would then be domed. This method was actually used at Ravenna. It had the defect that the big curve of the dome had gone—it lay outside the square, cut off by

the wall—and the resulting dome was saucer shaped. If the dome was to be a true dome, it must touch the sides of the square at their middle only, leaving beyond spaces roughly triangular to be filled up. The attention of architects thus became concentrated on the triangular spaces. If properly filled, they would carry the dome and convey its weight to the corners where the square was strongest. A Greek of genius at last thought his way to spherical triangles, the proper pendentives of a dome, and the problem was solved. A dome of any size could now be built and the architects of St. Sophia resolved to substitute a dome for the traditional roof of a basilica. They perceived not only that the change would immensely increase the area actually enclosed, but that the eye, if caught at once by the swelling dome, would further exaggerate the effect. They carried out their ideas with the bold thoroughness of men who believed in them, and so produced that sense of overwhelming vastness which makes St. Sophia the most wonderful building in the world.

The story of the dome was thus complete in antiquity with this proviso—that from first to last only its internal effect was considered. The Renaissance, which had learnt from Northern builders to appreciate external impressiveness, reversed the emphasis. The contradiction is complete. All St. Sophia is not such a landmark in Constantinople as is the dome of St. Peter's in Rome, but once St. Peter's is entered, the dome might as well not be there at all, and the Renaissance completely missed that impression of vastness which antiquity achieved. So far, then, as their main contribution to ecclesiastical architecture was concerned, the construction of domes which literally crowned a city, the Renaissance could learn no lesson from earlier work, and this fact alone is enough to explain their

disdain for the basilica. The further point may be taken that the basilica dealt with pillars, whereas the Renaissance was profoundly interested in arches. Yet when all allowance has been made for these technical considerations, the breach with tradition creates astonishment, particularly in Rome, and perhaps the whole truth lies somewhat deeper. The Renaissance was not merely a classical revival. It did not imitate antiquity, but rather sought to express Northern ideas in an antique way. The Renaissance arch is more than the arch of Roman builders, which was a constructional convenience to be masked by Greek decoration. It is brought into prominence, is shown for what it is, and though it is as serene as the Gothic arch is restless, it, too, is tremendously alive. Similarly Renaissance pillars and pilasters are not simply supports. Their great sturdy stretch from ground to cornice echoes the soaring horizontal lines of Northern cathedrals. It would be a paradox to say that the Renaissance is the triumph of Gothic ideas, but it holds an element of truth worth remembering, particularly in Rome. It helps to explain why Roman architects, at the very moment of their breach with the semi-classical tradition of the basilica, were enthusiasts in matters of detail for the purer classical tradition of the early Empire. It throws a ray of light on the profound brooding genius of Michael Angelo, which seems dissatisfied with its own products because, for all their advance beyond classical perfection, they are not thoroughly instinct with the Northern sense of aspiration. It accounts for contradictions in the acts of lesser men, of Sixtus V, for example, who flung all his energy into the completion of St. Peter's and yet loved and beautified S. Maria Maggiore. Above all, it helps to make intelligible the last, strange, most Roman phenomenon, that when the creative impulse of the Renaissance was exhausted and the new art

was becoming a mannerism, the old basilica form creeps back, and as it were shows through.

The Reformation threw Latin Christianity on its own resources, and the movement which reorganized the Church after the catastrophe and even recovered part of the apostate Teutonic world, was mainly directed by the Order of Jesus, itself a Latin body based on Rome and organized as autocratically as the Roman Empire itself. The church, which most clearly shows the influence of Jesuit ideas on architecture, reveals its origins by its name, Gesú.[1] The church is spacious, as a basilica is spacious and as St. Peter's is not, and the effect is due to the extreme breadth of the nave. As in a basilica, the nave is everything and the aisles nothing; in fact, the aisles have almost disappeared altogether, being absorbed into the side chapels. It matters not that the nave is supported on arches instead of pillars, for it is the nave itself that holds the eye. It matters not that there is a dome in the transept; its only internal importance is that it takes the place of the old clerestory and floods the church with light from above. Indeed in one respect the Gesú is more basilican than the basilicas. Their tradition held something of the Roman peristyle with its surrounding rooms, and of the pagan basilica with its surrounding offices. In the Gesú the tradition is made explicit by the side chapels, and if the architect of the Basilica Julia could be shown the Gesú's ground plan, he would find nothing startling about it. Only the method of execution, the dome to give light and the arches to give support, would make him realize that architecture had been transformed since his day.

In another respect, too, the Gesú approximates more

[1] S. Andrea della Valle and S. Ignazio may also be cited lest it be thought that too much is inferred from the characteristics of a single building.

closely to pagan models than the basilica builders would have tolerated. The early Christians stripped the classical basilica of all its decorations and set themselves to decorate afresh according to the ideas of their faith. The Renaissance scrapped all their work and went back to the Empire; indeed, there is something Imperial in the whole Church as reorganized by the counter-Reformation, with all the stress laid on its comprehensiveness, its authority, and its magnificence. The Gesú gives a better idea than any ancient building in Rome of the decorations of Domitian's Palace. The same means are used in the same way. Colour is not exhibited in patterns for its own sake, but is handled as an element in form, and all the warmth and splendour of the church comes from the slabs of marble on its walls. There is even the same conspicuous opulence in the variety of the marbles themselves, their rich blends and contrasts making the Gesú utterly different not only from S. Maria Maggiore, with its sober pillars, but even from St. Peter's with its prevailing uniformity of whites and greys. The Gesú, later than either in date, is earlier than either in thought. It is a pointed reminder that the Pope is heir to the glories of the Caesars. A conscious echo of the Empire, it carries the story of the basilica round again to the point from which it started, and in the spiral of architectural progress Vignola stands directly above the nameless designer of old St. Peter's.

CHAPTER IX

SIX TYPICAL CHURCHES

Difficulty of choice—S. Sabina—Its history—Its mosaics—The main door—The carved panels—Internal features—S. Lorenzo Fuori le Mura—The porch—Its tombs and paintings—The double church—Interior details—The cloister—S. Maria in Ara Coeli—Structure and decoration—The name Ara Coeli—The communal Church—Its tombs—The Santo Bimbo—S. Maria del Popolo—Atmosphere of the church—Pinturicchio's work—Renaissance tombs—S. Paolo Fuori le Mura—The old church and the new—Internal effects—Quality of the basilica—S. Pietro in Vaticano—Characteristics external and internal—Its dimensions—Defects in design and detail—Michael Angelo's Pietà—The crypt—A museum of arts—Its tombs—Conclusion.

A SURVEY of the churches of Rome must needs deal in generalities, and such a treatment must needs be misleading. All churches take on atmosphere as they mellow, and in Rome, where men of every stock in Europe have built and rebuilt, decorated and redecorated, in diverse styles through centuries of diverse fortunes, no two churches have mellowed under the same conditions. The outlines of principles are thus only discernible through the multitudinous details enumerated in guide-books, and as churches are naturally visited not on any system but according to the order of their situation, it is in practice rather hard to see the wood for the trees. A few detailed descriptions therefore seem necessary to correct the impression of formalism and adherence to type conveyed by talk of principle and evolutionary development. Half a dozen instances should suffice, but their selection is a troublesome and even painful task.

To begin with, it takes some hardness of heart to throw out such characteristically Roman buildings as the Pantheon and S. Maria degli Angeli. But the fact that they are churches is important only because it accounts for their preservation. They illustrate neither rules nor exceptions, and at most only show the elasticity of Christian thought in regard to architecture. Next—and this is indeed a blow—there can be no room for exceptions in half a dozen churches chosen to bring out the variety of type. This harsh decision excludes some of the most fascinating haunts in Rome. It banishes S. Saba, which owes its quality to its beautiful site and to the construction of an upper portico for the sake of the view; S. Agnese which, more than any church in Rome, has caught the refinement and elaboration of detail which distinguished the art of the Greek Empire; S. Maria in Cosmedin, which has so skilfully built itself up out of portions of older buildings; S. Agostino, where, for once, Renaissance artists set themselves to decorate in the thorough-going mediaeval manner; and—perhaps worst of all—S. Prassede, with its special wealth of mosaics and its unique introduction of arches to break the horizontal vista of its pillars. The pen writes these names tenderly, for they call up reminiscences of joyous things, but their joys can only be savoured by those who know Rome well enough to be aware of her artistic by-paths and to appreciate them for what they are. Finally, no account will be taken of churches which have mellowed, as it were, by accretion, such as S. Maria Maggiore, a basilican core with a Renaissance rind;[1] or SS. Giovanni e Paolo, with its relics of the primitive oratory beneath a twelfth-century apse and a nineteenth-century side chapel; or

[1] I specially regret the omission of this church because the grasping insolence of its sacristan makes it difficult for visitors to examine its details for themselves.

S. Clemente, where the type has instructively perpetuated itself in successive layers. The omission of these churches is the more pardonable because the clear separation of their various parts makes them easy to understand. For the rest, exception will no doubt be taken to the process of exclusion adopted, and to the selection finally made. Enough to say that the examples are intended to illustrate three types—basilicas, Renaissance churches, and churches which owe their interest to their historical associations; and that choice has been made of two of each, having regard both to their representative character and to the effectiveness of their contrast with one another.

S. SABINA.

A first glance into S. Sabina suggests that it has had no history. The entablature, windows, and roof show obvious signs of restoration, but the restoration no less obviously follows the old lines, so that the church looks very much as when it was built. The first impression is misleading. Though not one of the great historic churches of Rome, S. Sabina has its little story, and one episode strikes the visitor as peculiarly appropriate. It is connected with the prelude to the Reformation. In its last effort to assert itself against papal autocracy the Council of Basle elected an anti-Pope. But Rome was too strong and Felix V, as he styled himself, was compelled to recant his errors. After his submission he was made a cardinal, and S. Sabina was his titular church. There were no anti-Popes after Felix V. In less than a century the attempt to settle controversies within the bosom of the Church was abandoned, and there followed schism and Martin Luther. With the transformation, therefore, of the anti-Pope into a cardinal, Christian union was restored for the last time, and it seems a happy touch that the last schismatic

to repent should have been made titular of a church, which is so striking a memorial of the earliest triumph of the faith.

In the thousand years which it had then stood, S. Sabina had experienced the usual vicissitudes of Roman churches. It held the bodies of saints, so was high in honour during the early mediaeval period, when relics were venerated with special devotion. In the ninth century it was decorated with the splendour befitting a shrine, but not a trace now remains of its adornments. Five hundred years afterwards it was caught up into the current of the great monastic revival. St. Dominic himself dwelt beside it, and it was eventually assigned to the brethren of his Order. This change in its fortunes also had an effect on its structure. The Dominicans built a transverse wall right across it so as to separate the congregation in the nave from the monks in the choir ; and of this structure, too, no trace survives. One and the same hand swept away the additions both of earlier and of later mediaevalism. In pursuance of his general policy of exalting the papacy in its home, Sixtus V bethought himself of S. Sabina's remarkable antiquity and made it a station church. In order to give room for the Easter ceremonies, ornaments and dividing wall were alike abolished, and S. Sabina became a fifth-century basilica once more.

The recent most tactful alterations have given further emphasis to its original aspect. True, the church has become cruciform. But the addition almost conceals itself so that there is no need to think it away. The side chapels open inconspicuously out of the aisles, and attention has not been called to their presence by breaking the line of nave pillars as at S. Maria Maggiore. True, also, that the church bears record of the passage of centuries, but this necessary hint of the lapse of time is given unobtrusively and suitably by tombs. In the

middle of the nave is the mosaic gravestone of a Dominican general. The figure itself is done in black and white stones almost in the early classical manner. But over his head is a decorative pointed arch, and along the sides run strips of the brilliant-coloured mosaic which the Cosmati and the Vassallecti made popular. A series of other tombs are ranged about the walls, illustrating the development of monumental taste almost down to our own day. The Renaissance tomb at the end of the right aisle is of the best period and deserves more than a passing glance. Hard by is a mediaeval tabernaculum—a brilliant bit of cosmatic colouring. The whole story of the transition from mediaeval to modern art is summed up in these two monuments.

The tomb mosaic in the centre, made as it was just before the papal migration to Avignon, is among the very latest utterances of the art which specially characterizes mediaeval Christianity in Rome. Over the door is an example of the same art in its beginnings. It takes the form of an inscription in hexameters, flanked by allegorical figures of the Churches of the Circumcision and of the Gentiles, the symbolism recalling that both St. Peter and St. Paul preached the Gospel in Rome. The form of the letters and the manner of execution—gold on a blue ground—are alike almost classical. The mosaic commemorates the founder of the Church, an Illyrian named Peter and worthy of his name, and is fifth-century work. The man who designed it evidently had an intense feeling for colour, and it seems impossible to resist the conclusion that he would have put his memorial in the better lit and more conspicuous apse if the apse had not been mosaiced already. Unhappily nothing is left of the work. The semi-dome is now filled by a later Renaissance painting, which cannot reproduce an earlier mosaic, since of the four Latin

fathers who stand prominently in the foreground, three were barely dead and the fourth was not yet born when the church was built. Yet there are elements in the design which are not in the Renaissance manner—the Christ enthroned on a mountain of the New Jerusalem, and the lambs drinking of the water of life which flows from beneath his feet. Since both these features occur in early mosaic work—the throned Christ in S. Lorenzo, the symbolic lambs in SS. Cosma e Damiano—the conclusion suggests itself that the Renaissance painter found traces remaining of the top and bottom of the original mosaic and incorporated their subjects in his design, filling up the vanished centre according to his own fancy.

One other ornament of the church is worth notice. In several of the ancient churches of Rome are preserved large shaped pieces of black marble. Tradition usually describes them as fetters worn by martyrs. Here the association of S. Sabina with St. Dominic justified a variant, and the marble is said to have been flung by the Devil at the saint. In fact these marbles are standard weights. They were placed in the temples so that ordinary shop weights might have a standard of comparison near at hand, and were transferred to the churches when the temples were abandoned. Accordingly they are memorials of the final triumph of Christianity over paganism.

But the great decorative glory of the church is on its threshold. The main portal of the church is obviously a classic doorway, as is the main portal of the neighbouring church of S. Alessio ; and as two famous temples stood on the Aventine, the one dedicated to Juno and the other to Diana, there can be little doubt that these were their entrances. The position of the main door of S. Sabina shows that the church was originally entered from a road running down towards the river roughly

parallel with the present Vicolo di S. Sabina, and at right angles to the present Via della Marmorata, but it does not follow that the door gave immediately on to the old road. As the entrance to a basilica lay normally under the fourth side of the atrium, the average doorway was quite undistinguished, but in this case the fact that a fine marble portal lay close at hand accounts for a different treatment, and it is unnecessary to conclude that the original basilica lacked the customary atrium. On the contrary, the fact that the portal was filled by wooden doors with elaborately carved panels rather suggests a colonnade in front to keep the rain off. Perhaps the spiral columns still standing in the porch were once part of it.

The panels themselves are unique in Roman decorative art, and quite a literature has grown up round them. The doors were evidently restored from time to time, but it seems that there were originally 12 large and 16 small panels. The elaborately carved border which divided them from one another is modern but repeats the original design. It is the symbolical vine banished as a main topic but not yet omitted altogether, and the fact that it is thus caught half-way to its exit is alone enough to give special interest to the doors. But the panels themselves are more important than their surround. Recent criticism has pushed them farther and farther back in date and the oldest of them are now thought to be contemporary with the church itself.

It is generally admitted that nothing in the door is older than the Crucifixion at the top left-hand corner, and if this piece is to be dated back to the first third of the fifth century it is the oldest known representation of the subject. It was not at first the Christian practice, even after the Constantinian peace, to depict the passion of Jesus realistically. A world in which paganism was still strong could not be expected to appreciate the

spectacle of a God dying on the Cross—the official instrument of capital punishment, corresponding to our gallows. Conditions had indeed changed somewhat after Constantine had abolished crucifixion as the normal criminal penalty, but probably the Christian did not openly glory in the Cross until after 410. The barbarian capture of Rome, the world's sovereign and inviolable city, stirred civilization to its depths and the writings of Augustine and Orosius show that there was some tendency to hold Christianity to blame for it. If the Christians had not neglected the things of this world, if their best men had not preferred to lead lives of ascetic meditation in contempt of their duties as citizens, then, it was alleged, the Empire would not have crashed down in ruin. Augustine's reply was to write a book with the significant title *De civitate Dei.* What mattered the fate of Rome to men whose proper dwelling was in the city of God? In the same spirit Christian art showed its triumphant disdain for worldly splendours by glorying in the death of Christ upon the Cross.

This particular Crucifixion is certainly very early. The rendering of the background is classical in temper. Jerusalem is represented by a wall with regular courses of stones. The crosses themselves are a little half-hearted, being part crosses and part pilasters in the wall, and in the case of Jesus' cross only the point of it is visible beneath his feet. The treatment, however, is matter-of-fact. Art depicts the scene, but does not yet idealize it. Christ has no nimbus, wears only a loin cloth, and is shown between the two thieves, in accordance with the Gospel narrative, but in contradiction to the practice of somewhat later Christian art. This panel is centuries earlier in feeling than the picture in S. Maria Antica with its allegorical seamless robe. Here the only hint of the later idealization of the

suffering Christ is that His figure is rendered on a larger scale than the thieves. Another panel which points forward to later art is at the right-hand end of the second row. Christ is shown in an aureole, around which are set the symbols of the evangelists as in the S. Pudenziana mosaic. Below is an *orante* with St. Peter and St. Paul on either hand. These three figures are reminiscent of early art, as is the "Greek god," beardless face of Christ himself. On the other hand, the latters *A* and *Ω* in the aureole, and the *IXΘYΣ* on the scroll in Christ's hand, belong to a later phase, and the whole panel is puzzling and appears to have been worked over more than once.

Most of the other subjects recall the sarcophagi. The panel below the Crucifixion, for example, represents three familiar miracles, all symbolizing the Eucharist—the healing of the blind man, the multiplication of the loaves, and the turning of the water into wine. The combination of subjects in continuous narrative is also characteristic of sarcophagus art, as is the union of Old and New Testament subjects in the same scheme. The panels thus bridge the gap between sarcophagi and mosaics, and unique as they are in subjects, date and material are worthy of most careful examination by students of the evolution of Christian art.

In surveying Roman churches it is usually wise to digest the ornament before passing to detailed scrutiny of the structure, as it thus becomes clear how far the total effect was intended from the first and how far it is the incidental consequence of mellowing. The door of S. Sabina, with its splendid portal and its decorated panels, is the earliest example of that love of accumulated detail for its own sake, which is a main difference between classical and mediaeval art. It thus supplies a hint of what to look for within. If the interior matches the threshold, if it is distinguished by touches

of richness alien to classical severity, S. Sabina will offer an example of a transitional basilica, caught in the very act of becoming Christian.

The first glance is disappointing. With its wide spaces and its shining columns the church is almost Hellenic in its clean austerity. Then one by one, the details emerge. The columns are set well apart, in contrast with their close line in the contemporary S. Maria Maggiore, as though meant to be looked at individually. They are fine columns, too, well-fluted, well-capitaled, chosen out of the wealth of material on the Aventine by a man who appreciated their artistic superiority to the more gorgeous spiral columns outside. There is a refinement, too, in the way they are laid—not a classical refinement but such a device as would only have occurred to a builder familiar with classical practice. The bases of the columns nearest the door stand a good two inches above the ground. Farther inside the visible part of the base diminishes, and in the columns by the apse has vanished altogether. The effect of this subtle touch is to make the columns seem to stand in diminishing perspective and to increase the apparent length of the church. Above the columns arches take the place of architraves—a striking breach with classical tradition. The breach was deliberate, for workers on the Aventine in the fifth century would certainly have been able to find material for architraves in the two temples they were using as quarries. The explanation probably lies in the Dalmatian origin of the founder of the church. As Freeman was the first to point out, Diocletian's Palace, in which Spalato now nestles, supplies examples of a novel, most unclassical use of the arch as an ornament. Its adoption in this church is doubtless intended to give new life and movement to the formal basilican scheme.

Above the arches are decorations in coloured marble.

The use of coloured marble was, of course, quite in the style of the pagan Empire, but the treatment here is novel. The Empire used its marble in slabs; whereas this marble is deliberately broken up into a line of circles and lozenges. It is a first effort to exhibit colour through design, the idea which later found effective expression in pavements. Here the work is tentative and in the more elaborate patterns set over two of the capitals, colour and design rather injure than help one another. But the intention at least is clear. Peter the Illyrian was evidently fond of innovations.

Nothing can now be conjectured as to the original treatment of the entablature, but the pierced woodwork of the windows has been restored from ancient fragments. Here the mediaeval attitude towards detail has begun to reveal itself. The frames are complicated, very different from the plain lattice work of more classical art. Moreover, there are two designs, and there may originally have been more. Classical windows were uniform, and the strain after variety is significant. Still more significant is the cumulative effect of all these various departures from tradition at every level from column base to window frame. In itself not one of the details is un-pagan; taken together they transform the basilica and make it the fit centre of a living and growing worship. The modern restorers have been inspired to paint the edges of the windows red, and when the evening sun shines through them splashes of colour fall on the marble. That is the ideal light for S. Sabina. The church is peaceful and the peace of the Aventine is about it, but it is all light and airy and full of possibilities and hints of the future, and it conveys a moving suggestion of the spirit, at once serene and enterprising, with which Christianity entered on the enjoyment of its final victory over paganism.[1]

[1] The cloister, whose Gothic work would contrast interestingly with the basilica, is inaccessible, having been incorporated in the adjacent isolation hospital.

S. LORENZO.

Of the more ancient churches of Rome, S. Sabina has been least touched by time. S. Lorenzo, on the other hand, has been transformed by it. The fourth, fifth, sixth, thirteenth, and nineteenth centuries have all left their mark upon it, and there is no better example in Rome of how a church can mellow in its structure. It is a priests' church. It stands over the tomb of the priest-martyr, St. Lawrence, and the remains of the other priest-martyr, St. Stephen, have been laid beside him. The earliest structure dates from the Constantinian peace. Naturally the church then did honour to her more recent martyrs, and there were men still living who remembered St. Lawrence, dead less than forty years. Rather more than a century later the same great outburst of building which produced S. Sabina and S. Maria Maggiore led to the erection of a second basilica hard by the first. The two churches remained touching one another for centuries, until Honorius III threw them into one. Finally Pius IX caused further modification of the older church by directing that he should be buried in it.

The present porch dates from Honorius III, and itself exemplifies the bewildering fascinating way in which the whole church has become impregnated with history. Its columns are antique, but their capitals, the mosaiced architrave, and the carved cornice are of Honorius III's day. The workmanship is of high excellence and covers the whole artistic technique of the time, patterns and figures being represented both in stone and in mosaic. The work seems once to have extended along the sides as well, and a piece of it now lies on the ground in the cloisters, where it can be examined minutely. Like a somewhat earlier ciborium inside, it shows how much of the classical tradition was preserved right through the Middle Ages, and helps to explain the overwhelming power and vitality of the Renaissance in Rome.

Inside the porch are four sarcophagi. Two of these are Greco-Etruscan tombs in the form of temples. The roofs are worth a glance because the roofs of actual temples have generally disappeared. It will be noticed that the ancients came near to devising gargoyles. The other two tombs are both Christian, and that on the left is remarkable. Vines, peacocks, and genii are carved over the whole of its surface. There is no real attempt at unity of treatment, but the artist evidently felt that he must bring his themes together somehow. His genii might gather grapes and his peacocks eat them, but how combine genius and peacock? He solved the difficulty by setting one genius triumphantly astride a peacock's tail. Thanks to this touch, the sarcophagus shows better than any other—better even than the parallel piece in the Lateran for all its superiority of execution—the Christian attitude towards pagan artistic themes. The joyful innocent nature of the subject commends it and the symbolic significance of the vine can hardly have been felt. The Christian who chose it must have been a man of culture, who was dissatisfied with the crude treatment of Biblical subjects and preferred a lower aspiration whose artistic possibilities were adequately developed. This beautiful work has been scribbled over with coloured pencil and has not been cleaned for at least twelve months.

The walls of the porch were painted with pictures telling the story of the two saints buried within. The panels dealing with St. Stephen detail the adventures of his body until its eventual transfer to Rome. The saint's coffin was first removed from Jerusalem to Constantinople. Rome wanted it and sent a request to the Emperor, offering the body of St. Lawrence in exchange. The proposal was accepted, but when the Greek cardinals attempted to move the body of

St. Lawrence an invisible hand struck them down, as is shown in the last panel but one ; and in the final picture (the lowest by the door) the Pope is seen enclosing both saints in their common tomb.

The St. Lawrence series shows the saint distributing the papal treasure. Then come his appearance before the Emperor, his baptism of his jailer, and his martyrdom. The series does not quite fill the available space, and closes, for no very apparent reason, with a picture of a king receiving Communion. The priest who administers it is bearded and therefore presumably a Greek, and the picture would seem to refer to a contemporary event. In Honorius III's day the Venetians had recently conducted the raid known as the fourth crusade, and a Latin dynasty had been established on the Greek throne. Romans of the time were doubtless interested in these developments, and a picture which paid a compliment to the new regime at Constantinople may have been added by way of compensation for the misfortunes of the Greek cardinals in the series on the other side.

The paint is still fairly fresh and the pictures have evidently been restored in recent times, but the restoration may conceivably reproduce originals of Honorius III's day, two generations before Giotto. Certainly the pictures were not the work of Renaissance artists. The whole composition discounts the idea. But neither are they of Giotto's school, though there are Giottesque touches ; in particular the flames about St. Lawrence's body recall the frescoes in S. Croce, of which Ruskin writes with so much enthusiasm. But Giotto and his school did not paint architectural backgrounds after this fashion. They worked almost in black and white—light houses with dark windows—and their buildings were simple in form. These structures are daring but not fantastic, and evidently aim at reproducing reality. This is an architecture of lofty columns carry-

ing arches, and lovers of Venice will be reminded of the city's oldest palazzi. The style is Greek, is the development of the mode set by the nave of St. Sophia, and its pictorial reproduction in Rome just after the fourth crusade need occasion no surprise. Perhaps, indeed, the influence of Constantinople on Italy was greater than is usually supposed, and was not confined to work in metal and silk and mosaic. Little is known as yet about the art of the late Greek Empire. The Turkish character is not marked by a passion for archaeology and Constantinople has not begun to yield up her secrets, the opportunity created by the allied occupation of the city having been let slip. But the architecture of these pictures is illuminating. There is nothing formal and imitative about it. It has a definite intention ; it aspires. The columns are as lofty as builders dare make them, the arches are light, the work as a whole airy and up-springing. This is precisely the Gothic intention though in the very opposite of the Gothic manner, and it may perhaps be inferred that in the Middle Ages the same idea of aspiration dominated all the architecture of Europe, and that art, anticipating Voltaire, allowed Eastern and Western builders to aim at heaven, each in his own way.

These didactic pictures were repeated inside the church, but to show equality between the two saints their position was reversed, the scenes from St. Lawrence's life being placed on the left. These still remain, but the corresponding St. Stephen series was abolished half a century after its completion to make room for a cardinal's tomb. Posterity cannot complain. The cardinal is buried in a pagan sarcophagus with a fine representation of a pagan marriage—a curious touch of Roman irony ; over it is a thirteenth-century fresco, and the whole is covered in by a classical rendering of a Gothic canopy.

A glance at the lie of the ground will explain the curious structure of the church. The present level space is artificial, the ground to the right being considerably lower and the ground to the left considerably higher than the present piazza. Owing to the original slope the two adjacent churches were on different levels, the earlier church being the lower. Accordingly, when Honorius III threw the two churches into one, he had to devise some means of joining up the floors. It was not possible simply to raise the level of the older floor, for this would have made the tomb inaccessible. The only course open to him was to convert the tomb into a crypt by building his own choir over it, and the much re-modelled church thus acquired a third floor higher than either of the other two. This variation of levels concealed the fact that, as can be observed from without, the two churches are not precisely in a line. As a consequence of this arrangement the aisles of the older church were filled up and pillars were set in its nave to support the new choir. Pius IX had the aisles cleared out again, and thus made accessible the porch of the original church. This porch has now been turned into his mortuary chapel, and the Pope who made himself the prisoner of the Vatican has been buried on a site which poignantly recalls the speedy triumph of the Church over a persecuting State.

The entablature of the lower church has been painted with pictures melodramatic in temper and execution, and the beams of the roof have been coloured, also gaudily, in the mediaeval manner. It will take a century for the paint to tone down, yet somehow St. Lorenzo carries with it to a greater measure than any basilica in Rome, the peculiar peace of an old English village church. Perhaps this is because English village churches too have been much transformed by time, perhaps the suggestion is first conveyed by the ugly

and most Victorian pieces of coloured glass in the windows above the organ. But, absurd though the parallel seems, a visit to the galleries confirms it. Their floors are laid with the rectangular stone of warm reddish-brown tint so familiar to us and so rare in Rome, and the fact that one gallery is hung with wreaths in memory of Pius IX only heightens the effect. As for the simple little chapel which lurks, all curtained off, beyond the organ, it is hard to believe that it is not on our side of the Channel.

But the rest of the church is very different in quality. There are moments when the visitor to Rome is brought to despair by his sense overwhelming ignorance. S. Lorenzo is a terrible place. Only he who has a knowledge of everything that happened between Augustus and Pius IX may hope to understand it, and there is not even a good book about it to answer some of the more obvious questions. The pavement alone is a very maze of unsolved riddles. The main design, circles of coloured marble in white borders, is straightforward, but it is edged with examples of every method of pavement decoration. As it stands, the floor must represent the efforts of several centuries. And the device in the middle—knights in armour flanked by griffins, an exception to Roman tradition alike in subject and treatment—how came it there? And what is a Maltese cross doing in this place? The Knights of St. John had their headquarters on the Aventine miles away. The ambones again, present their own problems. How did they come to escape the general hostility of the Renaissance, considering that S. Lorenzo was restored by Nicholas V, the Pope who doomed old St. Peter's, and by Innocent X, the Pope who ruined the Lateran? From the first there seems to have been something about the church which warned innovators that old work must be respected. It is, indeed,

wonderful how little has been altogether abolished. Again, are the ambones contemporary, as would naturally be supposed, and if so, how comes it that the ambo of the Epistles, the simpler work, is built of carefully selected marbles, while the more striking ambo of the Gospels is a hotchpotch of material? Near the base on the left, for example, is a marble, ornamented with birds pecking at fruit in the style of the early Empire, inserted upside down. Farther up is another piece of marble with a deer or a stag etched in black; the rest of the picture has been cut away. These were pagan materials, but no greater mercy was shown to Christian stones. A fragment of an inscription has been used to form the front of the pulpit proper,[1] and the upper pillars behind the bishop's throne are pieces of a choir screen. What was the origin of all these elements, and how and why did they come to be so treated?

Similar questions present themselves in regard to the main structure of the church. The sombre, close-ranged pillars of the nave recall S. Maria Maggiore, and sufficiently betray the taste of Sixtus III. They set the tone of the building, showing how the fifth century made it its business to strip the basilica of its pagan glitter and reduce it to simplicity that it might then be made brilliant and glowing with the decorations of Christian art.

But if the mellowing finger of time had not been laid on S. Lorenzo, the pillars of the choir would swear at those of the nave. These splendid columns of pavonazzetto marble are the finest in Rome and may be presumed to have stood in the original Constantinian

[1] The capital of the pillar behind the pulpit is carved with a frog and a lizard, and it has been supposed that it came from the portico of Octavia and that its sculptors were Greek slaves named Batrachos (frog) and Sauros (lizard). But this is not classical decoration. The capital was worked in Honorius III's day like the rest, and was worked more elaborately because, being just above the priest's head, it was likely to be noticed.

church. The building was evidently finished in a hurry, as though no time could be lost in doing honour to the martyred Lawrence, and nothing could be more haphazard than the construction of the architraves. Cornices and even pilasters were chosen at random and pressed into service, with the result that this architrave contains most valuable material for the study of decorative art under the Empire. It is, of course, possible that the columns were taken from some villa in the neighbourhood on the road to Tivoli; but, amazing as was the luxury of houses in Imperial times, doubt may arise whether private magnificence could go to such lengths as this, and another explanation is possible. Similar columns stood in the Church of S. Paolo Fuori until its destruction by fire, and tradition said they came from the Basilica Aemilia. The excavations show that this basilica was burnt down at some unknown date, and was afterwards restored in rather mean fashion. It has been conjectured that the fire occurred during the sack of Rome in 410, but S. Paolo was built before that date, and it is possible that its pavonazzetto columns came from the earlier Constantinian Church. Now it is known that a most serious fire occurred in the Forum during the reign of Carinus (283), and there is a circumstance which makes it possible that Diocletian, when he rebuilt the Senate House, did not rebuild the basilica. That circumstance is that an immense new basilica near the end of the Sacred Way was begun by Maxentius and completed by Constantine, the need for which becomes explicable if the Basilica Aemilia was no longer available. When Constantine had finished the new building he may well have allowed the materials of the old to be quarried by the Christians for their church, and it would be rather a characteristic touch if Pope Sylvester directed that some of the columns should be used in honour

of the martyred Apostle and others in honour of the martyred Roman priest.

In the original church the architrave supported an entablature. The dainty galleries are later and may safely be attributed to Pelagius II, since they show the Byzantine influence which was strong in Rome in the later sixth century. To Pelagius is also due the mosaic which once surmounted an apse, but since the amalgamation of the churches faces the wrong way. The mosaic, produced when the art had only lately become fully conscious of its characteristics, is worth comparing with the modern work in the mortuary chapel of Pius IX. The sixth-century craftsmen understood the economy of colour and avoided the error of piling brilliance on brilliance. As their background glowed, their figures were plain. All were white except the Christ, whose scarlet robe stood out in contrast. All this feeling was lost in the nineteenth century. Colour is imposed on colour and the figures of the saints are almost invisible in the general glitter.[1]

Another interesting feature of the Pelagian mosaic is that the original windows have been preserved. It will be seen that they almost formed part of the design and that the light filtered through perforations now closed up. In S. Maria Maggiore the apse mosaic is almost invisible because of the glare from the windows above it. Here, too, the sixth-century men knew better.

The arches above the gallery columns are reminiscent

[1] The best piece of modern mosaic in Rome is Burne-Jones' apse in St. Paul's American Church (its own title ; tradition does not send the Apostle farther west than Spain). It is not entirely satisfactory. The gold, of which there is a good deal, is too gaudy for the general colour scheme ; there are too many figures, and the two halves of the composition do not balance. But the artist has shown that his characteristic principles of decorative design can be expressed in mosaic ; and he has not allowed himself to be diverted from his aim either by the influence of tradition or by the technical possibilities of his medium.

of the arches in the porch pictures and date from Honorius III. They were in the nature of experiments and gave so much satisfaction that a few years later the arch system was used in the construction of the cloister. The work has been much injured by time and owes most of its present charm to the warm colour of the paint. The capitals of the columns are mostly undecorated, though there are one or two rough attempts at carving; the doubled column is not used as part of the general effect but to carry special stresses in the middle of each side; and there is no trace of mosaic adornment. On the other hand, the cloister was in some respects more ambitious than its successors. It consisted of two stories—traces of the upper gallery still remain—and was finished off by a neat cornice. Later builders felt that their more ornate work was best restricted to one story, and the possibilities of S. Lorenzo only became apparent in Renaissance courtyards. The inscriptions which cover the walls and carry the history of S. Lorenzo back beyond Constantine, are interspersed with the remains of mediaeval decoration, and the visitor, as he strives to take everything in, is once again overcome by a sense of ignorance, until at last the exquisite peace of the place soothes him and he is content to feel history all around him and understand it not.

S. MARIA IN ARACOELI.

None will dispute the claim of the Aracoeli to a special place among the historic churches of Rome. The building which inspired Gibbon with the idea of his book must be peculiarly rich in its suggestion of the activities of mankind throughout the centuries. But unlike S. Lorenzo, the Aracoeli has not mellowed structurally. Indeed, time seems rather to have declared war on its structure. The church has never been fronted

and the additions which have been made to it have fared ill. There is nothing but modern marble in the staircase, originally set in position during the blackest period of the fourteenth century. The earlier material has been partly worn away, partly sacrificed to history. De Rossi observed that many inscriptions had been made to serve as steps, and arranged for them to be removed and preserved. Of the Franciscan monastery, which was once attached to the church and in which the Franciscan saints once dwelt, not a trace remains. It, too, has been sacrificed to history, having been swept away to make room for the Victor Emmanuel monument. Time has dealt equally harshly with the interior. The original architrave has gone. Probably the work was rough—the capitals show how cruelly ancient material was treated—and shocked the fastidious taste of the Renaissance, which did away with it and substituted flimsy and unhappy arches with a still more flimsy and unhappy gallery above The effect of this later work is negligible. The church is dominated by its haphazard time-worn pillars.

Internal decorations have to be looked for, but when found are noteworthy. The church contains two small Gothic rose windows, the best of their kind in Rome. They are set in the bare façade on either side the main door. At the junction of nave and transept are two ambones, also the best of their kind in Rome. The decoration of their fronts is unique. A round slab of coloured marble such as was normally used in pavements is the principal adornment. Below is a Byzantine nave in miniature—columns supporting arches ; and the space between is filled up with a series of glittering patterns thoroughly mediaeval in their variety and brilliance. These splendid monuments alone survive to show how the church must have glowed in its day of magnificence. A hint of the rest is given

by the pavement, which is quite a museum of rich marbles and fragmentary designs.

The decorative work of the Renaissance has not yet perished. The first chapel on the right was frescoed by Pinturicchio with an art which shows his wonderful flair for decorative design, and his gift for composing a picture in its space. These frescoes fit their chapel as a Velasquez portrait fits its frame. In a chapel in the opposite aisle is a fresco by Benozzo Gozzoli, a painter who has perhaps not quite come by his own, for he has a delightful naturalism and a most attractive ingenuity. But here there is something self-conscious about the *naïveté* with which he places his white-robed St. Anthony against a star-spangled background. Pinturicchio, for all his complications, is spontaneous. He sets his angels balancing one another in delicate curves and his Christ in his ornate mandorla, because he thought of them decoratively and painted as he thought. In a church as emphatically undecorative as this, Pinturicchio could not feel quite at home, and it is evident that he buried himself in his chapel and forbore to ask how his work would look from the middle of the nave. It can, indeed, scarcely have been visible, even when its colours were fresh. But a desire to assert himself against his environment, and at all costs to catch the eye of the visitor entering by the main door, has led him to paint one fresco which contradicts his usual warm crowded style of composition. St. Bernardine is painted as dying in a great Raffaelesque Renaissance piazza, all very spacious and white and chilly. The poor artist did not like it at all, and in an effort to give it the life he loved, put a baby in the foreground to contrast with the corpse. It is an unhappy piece of work and does not even succeed in catching the eye.

As a whole, then, the church owes nothing to its

decoration, and even proves to be less old structurally than its atmosphere would suggest. Whatever was there in the earlier Middle Ages, and the original foundation may go back to Gregory the Great, perished in the Guiscard fire. After the catastrophe the Benedictines, who then held it, rebuilt in a hurry. They hunted about in the ruins of the Capitol and Forum for columns, took the first that came to hand, hacked capitals about to equalize the height, and achieved a church which looks as if it might have been erected after the sack of Rome by the Gauls.

Its builders themselves appear to have originated the legend which has given the Aracoeli its name, and have claimed it to be coeval with the Empire. The story, which Sixtus V has duly noted on one of his re-erected obelisks, is that Augustus, when offered divine honours, consulted the Sybil, who told him that in the following year God should be born on earth of a virgin. A vision of a woman with a child in her arms, such as is now depicted on the ceiling of the church, confirmed the prophecy, and the Emperor set up an altar to the first-begotten son of God, which is said to be enclosed in the pseudo-Renaissance tempietto in the left transept. The reference to the Sybil is alone enough to stamp the story as mediaeval, and it appears that till rebuilt in the twelfth century the church was known as S. Maria in Capitolio. But the suggestion that the whole legend was worked up from the inscription *Ex cubiculo Augustorum* (from the Emperor's private room) on one of the pillars, seems a little far-fetched, and as the citadel of the first joint Latino-Sabine city stood on this height, it may one day be shown that *ara* derives from some late corruption of *arx*. As to the *coeli*, light is thrown on its origin by an inscription discovered in the course of laying the foundations of the Victor Emmanuel monument and

now in the Terme (Grand Cloister, 168). It was set up to a certain Flavia Epicha—

SACERDOTIAE
DEAE VIRGINIS CAELESTIS
PRAESENTISSIMO NUMINI
LOCI MONTIS TARPEI—

"priestess of the virgin heavenly goddess, of most immanent power in the region of the Tarpeian Rock." This heavenly maiden came from Carthage, and may thus eventually derive from Phoenicia. It was her destiny to give place to another Virgin deriving from Palestine.

In any case, the emergence of the legend is evidence that even in the twelfth century the church had begun to gather atmosphere. It owed everything to its position. When communal life revived and the Romans again bethought themselves of the Capitol, the Aracoeli became the city church. It stands to St. Peter's as St. Mary-le-Bow to Westminster Abbey. The whole body of citizens met in the piazza below and deliberations were held within its walls. It played its part in the great mediaeval struggle with the Empire, and at the end of the Middle Ages the leader of the last revolt against the papacy here appealed in vain for popular backing.

Very fittingly, therefore, the Aracoeli is rich in memorials of the Roman State. The finest of them all is the ceiling, a good modern restoration of work damaged in 1798. It was put up to commemorate the destruction of Turkish naval power off Lepanto in 1571, and the galleys worked into the design indicate the victory. Thanks to the ceiling, the church may claim an indirect and very Roman association with Augustus. Lepanto was fought in the same waters as Actium sixteen hundred years before and with the

same result. It freed Western Europe from all real danger of Eastern domination, and though the advance of Turkish arms was not checked for over another century, sea power was decisive. In the long struggle between East and West Lepanto repeats Actium, save that the more formidable crescent of Islam had replaced dog-headed Anubis and his fellow monstrosities of the stirring close of the eighth Aeneid. In the matter of design the ceiling is worth comparing with that of S. Maria Maggiore, done nearly a century earlier. Figure subjects have begun to displace mathematical patterns and decorative art is already half-way to baroque.

It is equally fitting that this church should commemorate good relations between the Roman people and their Bishop, and it now houses three statues set up by a grateful commune in honour of Popes. Two stand in the nave, the third, which is the earliest of them all and is Rome's tribute to Leo X, a Pope so typical of the Renaissance that he has given his name to his age, has been wisely tucked away in a corner of the left transept. It may put in a claim to be the worst gigantic statue ever carved and could not be allowed a conspicuous place anywhere outside Berlin's Siegesallee. The Pope's shapeless body—he enjoyed wretched health—and heavy features were against the sculptor, whose efforts to produce dignity of form and nobility of expression have only achieved the ludicrous.

The real secret of the church, however, lies not in its columns nor in its statues, but in its tombs. Nowhere in Rome outside the catacombs are tombs so numerous. They crowd the church. They cover the floor, they line the walls, they fill the chapels, and thrust themselves under the ceiling. They range back almost from 1870 into the dimness of the fourteenth century, after which time has made their dates illegible.

They illustrate the change in funereal fashions through the ages. Two of them, conspicuous near the door and mentioned in the guide-books, serve to point the contrast. One is an elaborate Renaissance wall-tomb, the other a simple floor slab. In fact, there is barely a generation between the two, for the slab was the work of Donatello. But its actual date is unimportant. The slab is much worn, and appears so old as to suggest that when Donatello was in his cradle it might have looked much as it looks now. Part of the secret of the Aracoeli may be guessed from this slab. Everything about the church is well worn. Hence its friendly, intimate air, as though it had mixed with folk for centuries before the Renaissance came and so was too old and homely ever to catch its air of splendid aloofness.

The rest of the secret is told by the other tombs. Their dates can be guessed from their styles. There is, for instance, a fine Renaissance scholar in one of the side chapels, with a pile of books on his coffin. Beyond him two figures of the next age look out on the world as though from a box at a theatre. Round the corner in the transept is the finest and best preserved Gothic tomb in Rome. The carved figures of the angels might have stepped from the porch of a French cathedral, but there is a certainty and grace about the drapery which whispers of the Italian Renaissance. Opposite, in the Savelli Chapel, are tombs instinct with Roman mediaeval feeling. The ancient sarcophagus which is incorporated in one of them is worth a glance for its own sake. It combines figure sculpture with the favourite Imperial fruit-and-flower motive in a thoroughgoing fashion which it would be hard to parallel. But the secret of the tombs does not lie in their variety, attractive though it is. It lies in the insignificance of the dead. On the floor are the tomb slabs of persons presumably illustrious in their day—priests, warriors,

ladies. On the walls the names survive, and not one seems to wake an echo in the memory. A very beautiful slab over one of the ambones commemorates a queen. She was Catherine, Queen of Bosnia, and she died in Rome in 1478. How many of Rome's visitors know that Bosnia once had a dynasty of its own, and to how many would Queen Catherine be more than a vacant name, were it not for the indefatigable Gregorovius? Her forgotten majesty is here buried with her peers. A common oblivion holds them all, and, since the great dead oppress, while the little dead are companionable, the Aracoeli is unique among churches in its thoroughly cheerful reminder of our common mortality. After all, these people have lived their lives and had their day and have had the fortune to be buried in this great church, and leaving no oppressive memory behind them, have made way for us for whom the sun shines in our turn.

The Franciscans who have been established in the Aracoeli for some half-dozen centuries have quite caught its spirit. The Christ for this church is no awful judge throned in majesty, and no agonized man-God dying on the Cross. He is a bejewelled baby Jesus, beloved of Rome's children. He lives in the second chapel on the right, and between Christmas and Twelfth Night little Roman boys and girls come and say poetry to him, and their parents and friends accompany them and fill the generally deserted staircase. Sometimes, too, he visits, or used to visit, children when they are ill. At any rate, when the Republic was established in Rome in 1848, and it was proposed to burn the Pope's state coach, a happy second thought preserved it for the Holy Bimbo's use in his drives through Rome to cheer the sick. It is a charming episode in the usually grim annals of the city, and is a pleasant and fitting last memory of the church.

As you leave it by the side door, the Aracoeli lays a final grip on your heart-strings. Framed in between the walls is a view of Rome's magic. There is no foreground, so that the picture, clean and bright in its harsh frame, seems a bit of fairyland. Turned into facts, it is seen to be built up of the Arches of Titus and Constantine, with the umbrella pines of the Caelian to back them and the line of the Alban hills to close it all in. Talk of decline and fall, if you will; this is Eternal Rome.

S. MARIA DEL POPOLO.

The Renaissance had both an architecture and a decoration of its own, St. Peter's being the best Roman illustration of the one and S. Maria del Popolo of the other. The church is rich in painting, and could not be treated as typical if it were not. But it gets its effects from its tombs, and from this point of view presents a curious contrast with the Aracoeli. It is difficult to carry away a precise memory of any tombs in the Aracoeli except the two at opposite ends of the transept, but in S. Maria del Popolo every tomb tells individually as though it had the church to itself. In actual fact the tombs are so numerous that they overflow the church into the sacristy, and even into the passage leading to the sacristy. In actual fact, too, the church is far older than it looks. It was founded late in the eleventh century, just about the time the Aracoeli was rebuilt, and its purpose, of which it does not now betray the slightest hint, was to exorcise the evil spirits that haunted the traditional site of Nero's burial place. Like the Aracoeli, its destiny was determined by its position. It lay at the main gates of Rome, and Popes used it as the starting-point of their entrance pageants. It has been decorated with the good taste which is perfect

because unconscious, to set off a procession, the colour on the walls echoing the colour of the participants, and the white of the marbles standing in cold contrast to remind them of the common fate of man. To get the "feel" of the church it must be thought of as crowded with red cardinals and glittering men-at-arms—pomp bustling itself into order against the entrance of the central figure in white and gold.

The pageantry is gone now, imprisoned in the Vatican, and the gilt angels which Bernini has set balancing on the curves of the arches do not take its place. But they, too, are important for the "feel" of the church, because they show whither the Renaissance was ultimately moving. It turned life—and for that matter death too, as these tombs show—into a pageant, and so taught men to look upon the world as a play. That is why the later tombs show effigies staring out, resolved to miss nothing, from their private boxes. There is a fine specimen at the end of the right aisle. He has got a good place, that old gentleman, and is making the most of it. He is not even averse to a peep behind the scenes, for all his respectability, nor will he be shocked at what he sees. Whatever the play was, it was safer not to moralize about it, as Charles II, who also had a good place, was very well aware. People who tried did not get very far. There was the gentleman buried by the door, for instance. His epitaph shows him to have been rich in artistic gifts, but all he made of it all was that he was neither flesh and blood when alive nor a skeleton when dead. His tomb is evidence that this is one of the things better left unthought.

Bernini at least had a better way. He sought to exhibit an ideal play in which there should be no particular meaning—after the Reformation the Latin world was weary of meanings—but the most perfect

stage grace imaginable. Hence his need of heavenly personages for his caste. Only an angel could do gymnastics on an arch with perfect grace, and only a saint could hustle without loss of dignity. Taken for the fastidious trifling that it was meant to be, baroque has its charm, but here it consorts ill enough with an architecture two centuries earlier which was busy seeking meanings. The Renaissance was still experimenting in Rome when this church was built, and had not yet come to realize that its two chief implements, the column and the arch, could not be welded together. These arches rest on architectural nondescripts, piers ashamed of their true nature and seeking to masquerade as engaged columns. Not till the sixteenth century was the true way found, and this church is an example of that rare thing, a Renaissance primitive.

Its decoration, however, did not begin until the right date, and in this church Pinturicchio is thoroughly himself. It has been his great good fortune that here, as in perhaps no other Renaissance church in Rome, the overshadowing influence of Michael Angelo has never been allowed to intrude, so that he is not forced so fight against later effects hostile to his bright, cheerful, superficial spirit. Bernini is his only rival here and he is simpler, happier, more unaffected than Bernini. His work tells at once. Worn though it be, the fresco in the first chapel smiles at the entering visitor as it never smiles in the Aracoeli, and in the third chapel the great decorator is so thoroughly at his ease that he can abandon colour altogether and set off his work by a border in grisaille. He was thus in a mood to expand when he reached the choir. All the space of the vault awaited him to be filled decoratively, and he was precisely equal to his task. The evangelists, the Latin fathers, and the Sybils, were the stock subjects ready for his use, and he has serenely treated them as though they

had no use save for decoration. The result is beautiful, successful, pagan, and most instructive artistically because it shows why, when the Renaissance began to stir, mosaic went out and painting came in. In the last resort figures cannot be used decoratively in mosaic. The material and its traditions charge them with significance. But painting had a free hand, and Pinturicchio was at once small enough to choose decoration and great enough to justify his choice.

It so happens that this same church contains a last effort at mosaic. The dome of the Chigi Chapel (the second on the left) is decorated from designs by Raphael. The work is a most intelligent attempt to use the whole technique of mosaic decoratively, and fairly faced the difficulty that merely decorative figures look empty when set against a glittering gold background. Accordingly the figures are designed to make complete panels in themselves, the gold is banished into their frame, and panels and frame are linked together by genii which look and point out of the picture. It is most ingenious ; precious, too, for its evidence of the fertility of Raphael's mind—but it would have looked better in paint.

The sculptors also worked decoratively, within the limitations imposed by their material. This may seem a hard saying, considering that their theme was death and that their treatment not only of effigies but of their accessories sometimes shows a depth of feeling that goes beyond mere elegance. But it is justified by the contrast between the Renaissance wall-tomb and the mediaeval tomb slab which it replaced. The tomb slab is an act of reverence to the dead. It seeks to perpetuate their memory as they were in life, but with the dignity of death superadded. It is an idealized portrait, the subject being portrayed in majestic sleep.[1]

[1] There are some fine examples in this church, particularly the unusually large slab near the door, with its Gothic canopy.

Time would seem to have sympathized with the intention, for as the flesh beneath has mouldered, the footsteps of living men have worn away the features on the slabs above till only the skeletons remain.

A Renaissance tomb, on the other hand, visibly seeks to give an effective aspect to a grave set in a wall. First, therefore, a mere effigy is not enough ; it would be lost in the surrounding space. Therefore the effigy must be framed. Next the relations of effigy to frame are so important that a standard formula is evolved. The frame is horizontal ; therefore the effigy must be vertical. The frame is in the main in low relief ; therefore the effigy is carved in the round. The frame is made up of panels ; therefore the effigy must have beautiful flowing drapery by way of contrast.

These are all decorative points, and equally decorative are the ideas which govern the development of the motive. The coffin, for example, upon which the effigy lies is at first plain to set off the drapery of the robes above, but soon comes to receive a treatment of its own. It is garlanded with flowers or its ends are shaped into the sensuous angel-sphinxes which only Tuscan sculptors can carve. The treatment of the slabs below grows equally in complexity. At first they are filled by the arms of the deceased, sometimes in colour. But this was felt to be a crude device, and figures of mourning cupids were soon introduced to give the more effective variety of higher relief. The frame is similarly treated. Its flowery margin is found too flat and is broken by statues of saints which, being themselves small and upright, set off the life-size recumbent figure in the centre.

Finally, in the sixteenth century, the whole scheme enters on a new phase. It is no longer enough to set a tomb decoratively in a wall. The entire wall must be decorated, with the tomb as the centre of the

design. The side chapels of S. Maria Maggiore contain the most thorough-going illustrations of this method, and S. Maria del Popolo would be an ideal example of its type if the wall-tombs in its choir could challenge comparison with these works. But they are poor specimens, and because of them the choir just misses perfection. Julius II was not destined to carry any of his enterprises to their full accomplishment. His keen critical eye saw what might be made of this choir. He was inspired to set two bright pieces of stained glass between Pinturicchio's ceiling and the tombs which he planned. It is a delightful touch, converting the vaulted roof into an airy place where live the angels and a sunbeam is sure to lurk. Alas! that his wars claimed him and he could not keep his infallible eye on Sansovino working on the tombs, and scamping his work when the Pope was not there to set the standard.

The church atones for its own defect by exhibiting a most characteristic piece of baroque. The baroque men were resolved to go one better than their Renaissance predecessors The Renaissance had worked within the limitations imposed by a wall. The baroque men chafed at all limitations and would make their tombs frame themselves. Further, the Renaissance had ignored colour, save for the rather garish device of setting gilt against white. It was for baroque to show the full range of marble. Here is the result in the left aisle. The medallion of the dead lady is set high up in a curtain of scarlet marble made to fall in most life-like folds, and to frame his work and to show that he could carve and chisel with the best of them, the sculptor has done an eagle above and a lion below. It is all so complicatedly clever that a reaction was inevitable. In little more than a generation it had come. Canova's monument of Clement XIII in St. Peter's retains the symbolical lion. But all the fripperies have gone. In

their place are figures done with a simplicity that shows up the badness of their modelling, and proves how utterly art had lost its classic tradition of naturalism. Between the tomb of the Chigi Princess and the tomb of the Rezzonico Pope there are not so many years as the calendar counts time. In the interval the French revolution had ploughed its sharp furrow across European thought.

There is always a temptation to analyse a process of artistic development, since analysis breaks up a whole into parts and reveals the mechanism. Moreover, Renaissance tombs invite analysis because they are based on a pattern. Yet the process is unfair. It is intellectual, and all art feels as well as thinks. There is feeling in the best of these tombs. Now and again the profile of some dead cardinal, stark and clear against the surrounding ornament, leaves a memory which must have been intended and which no more technical cleverness could have produced. Now and again in these effigies, particularly when the folds of the robes follow the lines of the body, Tuscan gracefulness is transcended and there is a hint of the serene austerity of Attic art. The hint may perhaps serve to indicate why Greek work in marble, while still developing in technical perfection, came down from the heights to which the Phidian school had carried it. It may be that Praxiteles saw and shuddered to see whither devotion to the Phidian ideal would lead him; for the purity and calm of Greek sculpture of the Periclean age, if it be brought down, as all art must be, to the human standard whence it originates, is a reflection not of life but of death.

In one thing more these Renaissance folk were Attic—in the zeal and faithfulness with which they studied the folds of drapery. There is a figure in bronze, for instance, low down and easy to examine. Those

folds have been minutely observed from life. So Browning's Bishop must have lain, dying by slow degrees, and felt his coverings stiffen into the folds of his tomb effigy. He haunts the visitor to this church which, having been built to exorcise one spirit, is thus now tenanted by another. Nor is his occupancy strange; for Bishop and church are both altogether Renaissance. There, perhaps, it were best to leave it, for the experience of a poet's imagination cannot be traced back to things of fact. Besides, there is nothing here so pagan as the tomb of the poem, though the pictures in the chapel dome below Raphael's mosaic come fairly close. Details, moreover, must in any case be sought elsewhere; the block of lapis in the Gesú, where, however, it adorns an altar, and the idea itself in the tomb of Julius II, which was never made at all. But at least, nothing can come out of S. Prassede; its quality is altogether mediaeval. Perhaps, after all, it was here where Renaissance tombs prevail over all other features, that Browning's genius was first inspired. The leering old canon at the end of the nave might be Gandolf. Moreover, on the first tomb of the first chapel on the left, it is written that its occupant built it in life, having the thought of his death in mind. There follows his style and title. He was the Cardinal of St. Praxed's.

S. PAOLO FUORI LE MURA.

Rome has reflected in architecture the contrast which the Reformation first pointed between St. Peter and St. Paul. St. Peter's is the type of the fully developed Renaissance church; St. Paul's of the early Christian basilica. Save for parts of the transept and choir it is a basilica of the nineteenth century, but this does not make it a piece of archaeological reconstruction. The church, burnt down a hundred years ago, went back in the main to the fourth century,

and the new church replaces its main characteristics. Comparison between the two buildings is easy. Piranesi engraved old St. Paul's both inside and out not long before its destruction, and reproductions of his work can be bought on picture postcards for a few soldi. It is at once apparent that the repairs of centuries left their mark upon the structure and that the Renaissance in particular treated it with all its want of respect for any other style. It did its worst outside when it concealed the old façade behind a porch of columns in pairs linked by arches, intended to give an air of proper stateliness. In point of fact the calculated simplicity of the basilica is intolerant of imposing effects, and there were bastard touches about the whole building.

These touches have also been given to the new church, though not in the same way. It has been provided again with the atrium which the old basilica had lost in the course of centuries, and the new work is instructive by reason of its departure from the early Christian model. Access should have been gained by a portal in a blank wall. The blank wall has gone and in its place is a Renaissance ornamental screen of arches. Internally, however, the columns of the atrium bear architraves in the old way and the effect at the entrance, where the curve of the arches shows the line of the architrave on the other side, is singularly disconcerting. Nor is the first bad impression modified by the general effect within the gateway. The atrium, which still lacks its central fountain, is not paved but has been laid out as a garden, evidently on the model of the delightful glittering cloister which adjoins the church but is in no way a part of it. Thus, in spite of the early Christian emblems on the walls, the atrium as a whole is not of its period, nor indeed of any period. Classical, mediaeval, and Renaissance ideas were in the minds of its designers, and as they had no clear model

to guide them they achieved a medley of styles which do not blend. The same confusion will be noticed in the mosaics on the façade. The lowest figures are Renaissance; above them comes a strip of early Christian symbolism associated with a bright mediaeval window ornamentation; and the figures of the gable are entirely modern and represent an art which takes its symbols so conventionally that it cannot even bethink itself of the scale required to make them tell.

The interior reveals other unhappy modifications of the original design, though in this respect the new church offends less than the old. A point which at once catches the eye is that arches have replaced architraves. The result is almost disastrous. The long vista of columns receding in perspective demands the strong horizontal line of the architrave to carry the eye straight to the altar-tomb, but for which the church would not exist. In its place is the broken, wobbly line of the arches. It is indeed remarkable that a change which works well in S. Sabina should here work so badly. But when S. Sabina was built the disintegration of the original elements of the basilica had been carried far. St. Paul's is nearer to the classical Greek type, which conceived of its parts in intimate relation with one another, and therefore could not bear substantial modification in any one of them without damage to the general plan. The strict idea demanded a vertical line over the columns and forbad the introduction above it of further horizontal effects. Both these rules were broken, the first obtrusively, the second almost invisibly, at any rate in the modern church. According to Piranesi's drawing, the lines of the columns were carried right up to the roof. In the present church the pilasters which frame the windows only start above the entablature and are thus properly inconspicuous. The entablature itself

was decorated in the old church with two rows of pictures, the effect being similar to that obtained in S. Maria Maggiore. In the new scheme they are replaced by the row of medallions of the Popes, substituted for the busts destroyed in the fire. It is a most happy change. The medallions, which are 5 feet across, are large enough to create a new vertical line pointing straight to the altar and counteracting the effect of the arches, but are also small enough to emphasize the great dimensions of the church. They also supply the requisite Christian touch of bright colour. The altar itself is Gothic and therefore quite out of keeping with the original scheme. But it does not jar, because it does not make any attempt really to fill the central space at the junction of nave and transept. It just serves to call attention to that all-important area, and there is no difficulty in conceiving how an altar only some 4 feet high would have filled the same function, provided only that it was broad enough to stand up clearly against the vast level of the nave.

These departures from the strict type require to be noticed because the church as a whole so closely corresponds to it. It is a Christian basilica, as its transept claims, but it is considerably nearer the pagan model than S. Maria Maggiore, and infinitely nearer than S. Sabina, which is self-consciously a church. In S. Maria Maggiore the process of simplifying the basilica back to its rudiments is already far advanced, and the effect of the church is due to its emphatically Christian decorations which the studiously plain columns serve to frame. In another century or so the granite columns of St. Paul's will have toned down, but at present their brightness makes them a good substitute for the parian and pavonazzetto columns which have perished and calls attention to the special quality of the church.

Save for the papal medallions, all the conspicuous brightness and freshness and gaiety of the church is in its structure, and is not imposed upon it by way of ornament. The pavement, for example, contains only a few of the brilliantly coloured round slabs which became the basis of the Christian decorative schemes. Its main effect is conveyed by the alternating rectangles of grey and white, a design as pagan as is the decoration of the walls with other slabs more varied in colouring but equally simple in pattern. In one respect, indeed, the present church is more pagan than the original. Its roof is coffered, whereas the old roof was open, and though it would be a mistake to draw any inferences as to the effect of pagan apartments of studied magnificence such as the throne-room on the Palatine, great buildings which reflected the more subdued general taste prevailing after Nero's day must have looked like St. Paul's.

The comparison is instructive. It is natural to conclude that the great houses of Imperial Rome, with their mass of gilding, their profusion of marbles, and their general solidity of construction, must have been as oppressively over-ornate as the great buildings of Bourbon France. St. Paul's corrects the error. It shows that when good taste worked upon vastness of design and splendour of execution, the total effect was delightfully cheerful and had nothing overwhelming about it ; and it is one of those pieces of good luck which Christianity owed to the time and place of its development, that it started on its career of expansion with the command of an architectural technique which was imposing but not vulgar, and which, being entirely worthy of the people who had conquered the world, could fittingly serve the faith destined to complete their work.

S. PIETRO IN VATICANO.

St. Peter's is the best and the worst Renaissance building ever put up—a medley of amazing contrasts inside and out. Its dome is superb, its façade execrable, and at close quarters the façade hides the dome. As if this offence were not enough, it goes on to commit every fault of which the style is capable. There is something very impressive in the effect of a massive triangular pediment over great Renaissance pilasters running right up to the cornice. Such a pediment gives the roof line just that touch of vastness at which the Renaissance aimed. But all the meaning goes out of the pediment if it stands not against the sky-line but against an attic story over the cornice. The fatal attic story is present in St. Peter's. It ruins the pediment, crushes down the columns below, and, being itself balustraded, gives the whole front a gimcrack appearance. Add that the architect made the mistake of supposing that engaged columns could look more massive than pilasters, that the windows are mean, and that a balcony too pokey to be a feature breaks the vertical line, and the devastating unworthiness of this façade will be realized.

In compensation the approach to it is by way of what is perhaps the most striking piazza in the world. It owes its form to Bernini, but for once Bernini was wisely inspired and was content to let space tell without endeavouring to force his own technical skill down the spectator's throat. The conception on which he based his design was indeed frigid enough. Cathedral and piazza together were to present an allegory of mother-church, with the dome for head, the façade for breast, the colonnades for the encircling arms. Happily, no one need bother about these fantasies ; in art it is the result, not the motive, that really matters, and the result here is admirable. The colonnades are strong

and simple enough to frame the space perfectly, and Bernini showed that with all his faults he was a man of real genius when he chose the massive Tuscan type of column to give effect to his idea. Hellas herself never got so much majesty out of her own architectural material. The statues which line the roof are, it must be admitted, somewhat of a weakness. But this form of decoration has always been congenial to Rome, and the spirit of the place covers it with its protection. The obelisk in the centre of the piazza and the two fountains in the curves of the ellipses give scale to the whole design, and the wind-tossed jets of water yield delicious contrasts both of form and of light. It was doubtless impossible for the junction of such a colonnade with such a front to be anything but unsatisfactory. The link is a wall, broken up so as to suggest a perspective. Its result is to cramp from the side a façade already cramped from above, and to diminish the size of the secondary piazza which forms the immediate approach to the church.

Inside it is the same story of great successes and great failure. Nowhere are there such Renaissance arches, nowhere such a Renaissance dome, and the prolongation of the nave has not marred the unity of the plan. Yet, as everybody knows, a first view of St. Peter's is disappointing. It should be enormous, it does not even appear large. The books lay it down that this impression wears off in time and that the full vastness of the church gradually becomes apparent. The doctrine is doubtful. The first false idea does not altogether persist, but St. Peter's never appears as large as it is. Perhaps it will only be centuries hence, when St. Peter's has gone the way of the Colosseum and blue sky frames the broken outline of its dome, that late-born eyes will at once appreciate its vastness. The best hint of it possible under present conditions

is obtained by re-entering the church from the sacristy, which is itself a spacious place. In contrast with it the cathedral proper soars to something outside the human scale of size. Another way may appeal to those who have strong nerves. Galleries run round both top and bottom of the drum of the dome. A walk round the lower gallery is interesting but not exciting; a glance down from the upper gallery into the depths below reveals the dimensions of the place with a sudden completeness that leaves few with the courage to attempt the circuit.

A simple test will reveal the permanent inadequacy of St. Peter's to convey the impression of its own magnitude. Along the nave are indicated the points to which the other great churches of Christendom would extend. The series of names begins close to the altar with St. Sophia, Constantinople. To the end it passes belief that that huge nave, if placed within St. Peter's, would only extend thus far. The test made, the list of names is worth reading for its own sake. Close to St. Sophia comes Westminster Cathedral, and it seems fitting that the earliest and the latest of the Byzantine masterpieces should keep close company together here. There follow at intervals the names of the greatest cathedrals of Christendom, an imposing list, most of all in such a place. Last, because largest, comes St. Paul's, London, and St. Paul's, it will be observed, is described not as an *ecclesia cathedralis* nor as a *basilica*, but as a *fanum*. There is a deal of point and feeling behind the choice of the word.

The defects of St. Peter's spring partly from the original design, partly from its execution. Bramante himself said that his plan was to set the Pantheon on the Temple of Peace. By the "Temple of Peace" he meant the building which we have now learnt to call the Basilica of Constantine, and the Renaissance was

thus unconsciously true both to its own spirit and to the conservative genius of Rome when it proposed to repeat Constantine's building on the site of Constantine's church. The idea raised an obvious question. How would the Pantheon and the "Temple of Peace" combine together? How prevent each from destroying the other's effect? Perhaps these questions were not fairly faced, even by Michael Angelo. But it must be remembered that the original plan provided for a church in the shape of a Greek cross, and it does not require the picture of the proposed elevation as painted over a door in the corridor beyond the Great Hall of the Vatican Library, to make it clear that St. Peter's would have gained immensely in unity had this plan been strictly adhered to. The unfortunate prolongation of the nave destroyed the internal affect of the dome. It is too far off from the present entrance to be noticed at all, but on the Greek cross plan it might have dominated the church. Further, it would appear that the massive simplicity of the piers and the elaborate coffering of the vaulting were intended to tell against one another. Possibly the contrast would have conveyed size, for the vaulting gives detail in a space where the eye can measure it. The decoration of the piers has marred the scheme. Sculpture and medallions are all to scale, but there is nothing to hint what that scale is. The very putti that carry the holy water are of gigantic breed. Moreover, the sculptures are restless, and size demands repose. Even the arches are robbed of their majesty by the angels which have been set on them.

Further, the church is too full. A great building requires to be kept somewhat bare, detail of a recognizable size being inserted frequently but unobtrusively, so as continually to be giving scale. The detail of St. Peter's is too big and too prominent. The altar, itself not at all unhappily conceived, is gigantic, and conse-

quently the detail of its canopy, which is full of scale-giving touches, is too high up to be seen. It is the same with the tombs. They are too large to give the scale of the spectator and too small to give the scale of the church.

It would seem, indeed, that St. Peter's cherishes a grudge against sculpture, and feeling itself ill-used by its own decorative statues has retaliated with a cruel outrage on the masterpiece it is privileged to house. No more wonderful work than Michael Angelo's Pietà was ever carved by human chisel, but apart altogether from its sheer beauty it is full of instruction, because it precisely illustrates the one point in which the Renaissance defied and contradicted the classical tradition.

Modern analysis of Greek work has shown that Greek artists attached immense importance to proportion. In all their products, from temples to vases, they based themselves on formulae, only departing from them to compensate for the defects of the human eye. It is this successful search for the right proportion, as characteristic, by the way, of Greek thought as of Greek art, which gives to the work of the best period its peculiar satisfying quality. It is just right because it is just true to scale. What is more, the scale can be grasped at once. Some detail that the eye can seize, the lip of a vase or the diameter of a column, has been planned in relation to the whole work, so that all its dimensions are linked together and mutually suggest one another. This feeling for right proportions is wanting in Renaissance work, and St. Peter's itself disappoints because there is nothing to measure it by.

Michael Angelo's Pietà shows that in his view the classical rule of right proportion requires not merely to be disregarded but to be outraged. The artist must show his genius by achieving the impossible. The impossible has been achieved here. The head of the

Madonna is the head of a spiritual woman in sorrow; her legs are the legs of a giantess. Were they anything less they could not possibly support the dead Christ. To Michael Angelo's mind the artistic interest of carving a Pietà clearly lay in the problem of reconciling these physical incompatibles. He has reconciled them, covering the transition in scales by the masterly use of the Madonna's robe. He thus succeeds and succeeds marvellously—for the Pietà is a greater work than the Moses, in which impossible proportions are again harmonized—where ancient art conspicuously failed. There is an antique statue whose maker has attempted the same thing, the Melpomene among the Muses in the Vatican. The figure of Tragedy carried a mask of Hercules in her hand, and is deliberately represented in a pose favoured by the sculptors of heroes, the left foot set on a rock, the left leg bent at the knee. A first glance shows that the distance between the right foot and the left knee is altogether preposterous, but no number of glances will destroy the harmonious unity of the Pietà. It is only when the work is considered analytically piecemeal that its discordant proportions can be induced to reveal themselves.

This glorious masterpiece is full of religious feeling and is properly housed in a church. But it should be housed worthily. It should be set alone in a small isolated chapel against a plain black background. It is actually set in an opening off the left aisle, it has other monuments unpleasantly near it, its background is variegated, a tawdry altar board in front of it offends the eye, and a couple of idiotic bronze cherubs are placing a crown on the head of the Mother of Sorrows. Only one indignity is missing, there are no paste jewels in the crown, but even without them the Pietà so treated is the most distressing sight in Rome.

St. Peter's, which huddles the Pietà into an unworthy

corner, hides other treasures in a basement. In and off the corridor, round what was the apse of the old church, are arranged a multitude of objects which once adorned it. They form a subterranean museum of amazing variety. In the side chapels are pictures of the old church, busts of the mediaeval Popes, remarkable mosaics and inlaid decoration. There is a statue of St. Peter with an ancient torso and a modern head, seated in a chair with mediaeval colour lines along its base and Gothic ornament for its back. There is a piece of a highly decorated Imperial frieze, which once formed part of the Lady Chapel of John VII, and two other pieces are ranged in the corridor outside. The same corridor is lined with beautiful work from the tombs of Pius II, Nicholas V, and Callixtus III. Here is Renaissance work at its best. Mino da Fiesole never carved anything more exquisitely delicate than his tomb-figure of Charity set here in the wall, and Giovanni Dalmata surpassed in the rendering of the serpent's tree in his panel of the creation of Eve.

Here, too, is one of the most splendid of early Christian sarcophagi, and here are pieces from the ciboria of Innocent VIII and Sixtus IV. The latter is a masterpiece. No Renaissance work shows more splendid feeling for relief in various depths than the scene of the martyrdom of St. Peter, with its audacious central subject, the fine muscular Apostle crucified upside down, its vigorous soldiers on horseback, its amazingly life-like trumpeters, its delightful final touch of wondering children in the foreground. But, indeed, the whole story of Renaissance art is told here for those who have eyes to see it. But they must be more than human eyes—there's the rub. All this beauty is blurred and marred and scarcely to be distinguished in the dim light of inadequate and badly placed lamps. Historically it may be fitting that these treasures should be

kept as near as may be to their original sites, but what an offence against art !

Pass from the corridor to the crypt—once the nave of Constantine's church—and all indignation is quenched, so that not even the maimed relic of the tomb of Nicholas V can revive it. Save for Westminster Abbey, this is the most awe-inspiring place in Europe. Here are memorials of Christianity in all its phases, from catacomb slabs to the tomb of Pius X. Here is a fragment of the epitaph of Gregory the Great. The surviving letters refer to his mission to the Angles, and a few yards away is the tomb of the last Stuarts. Here, too, is buried Adrian IV in an ancient sarcophagus of granite, worthy of the man. Nicholas V lies opposite him, Alexander VI behind, Boniface VIII below. Truly a place of strange contrasts. The crypt contains one other sarcophagus of granite. It holds the remains of the Emperor Otto II, so that the rivalry between Empire and papacy which forms the chief thread of mediaeval history is perpetuated even in coffins.

The crypt is low, the tombs plain, but there is here the profound historical atmosphere wanting in the church above, for all its lofty magnificence. In this narrow crypt, as amid the tranquil spaciousness of the Palatine, thought ranges freely along the lines which Rome is ever ready to prompt. It may muse upon the marvellous vigour and tenacity of the papacy, the oldest, strongest institution known to European history, and nowhere more significant than here. Or it may take a darker tinge, may contemplate the changes that Rome has known, all the work that she has seen performed, all the hopes she has seen cherished, all the men whose lives have been somehow given to her service. Here is the end of it all. They lie in strange company underground, and beyond them are the fragments of their memorials and above them the

spirit of the Renaissance exults in the greatest monument of its splendour—to pass most surely in its turn, when the lapse of centuries shall at last bring the doom pronounced on it according to the pitiless inflexible law of Rome.

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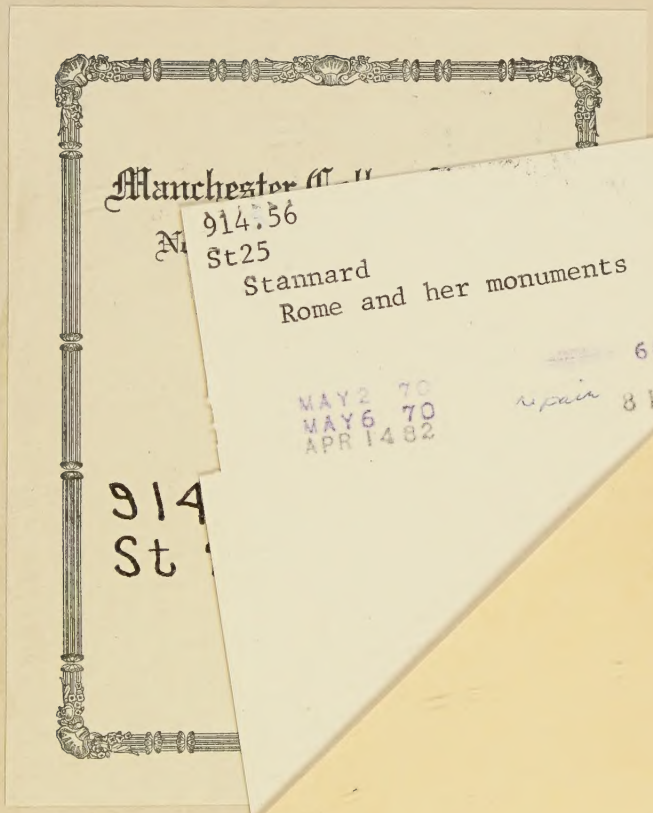

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